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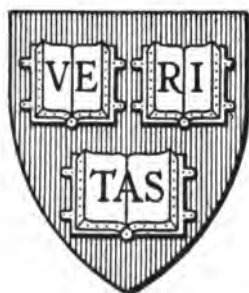
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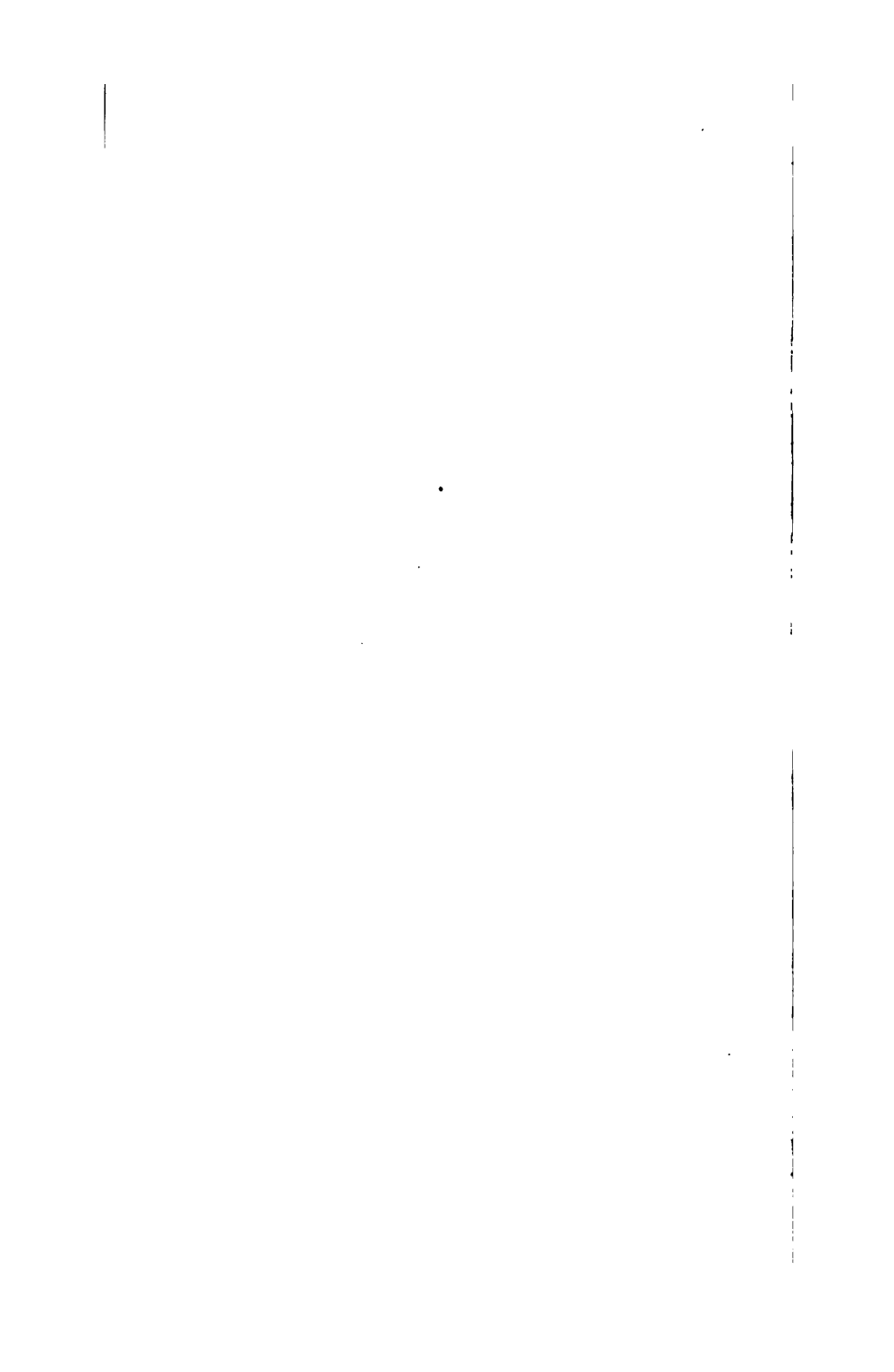
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# SARATOGA;

## TALE OF THE REVOLUTION.

G. F. Gleig.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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I know that we have all an innate love of our country, and that the greatest men have been sensible to its attractions; but I know also that it is only little minds which cannot shake off these fetters. PETRARCH.

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VOL. II.

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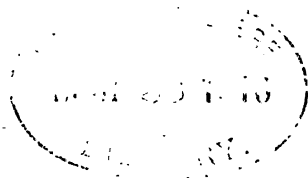
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## CHAPTER I.

'Twas strange, 'twas passing strange.

*Shakspeare.*

**T**HE following day proved stormy, and the little party at Major Courtland's were obliged to relinquish the hope of seeing Colonel Grahame in the evening. Abundant as their own resources were, there was not one of them who did not regret the disappointment, though none evinced more chagrin than Captain O'Carroll. His feelings, always ardent, were seldom either disguised or restrained; and, still in the hope of seeing the Colonel, he went perpetually to the windows or the door to watch the clouds, and see if there was any prospect of fair weather.

Towards evening the sky began to brighten with the hues of the setting sun, the wind subsided, the rain ceased; and, cheered by the certainty of a fine evening, he left the piazza, where he had been walking for the last half hour, to communicate the intelligence to those who remained within the house. When he re-entered the parlor, Major Courtland was alone, and extended on the sofa, indulging the twilight reverie, which long habit had rendered dear and delightful to him.

"The evening will be fair, sir, and we may expect the Colonel," said O'Carroll.

The Major, absorbed in meditation, made no reply; and the Captain, after repeating his observation with the same ill success, and adventuring several others which were alike unheeded, inquired in a somewhat impatient tone, if the ladies were in Captain Talbot's room. O'Carroll's accent certainly aroused the Major, for he

depressed his eyes from the ceiling, where they had been watching the fitful quivering of the fire light, and fixed them on the Captain's face, with a vacant look of wonder and inquiry, which sufficiently evinced his ignorance of all that had been said.

"He has not heard a word that I have pronounced," muttered the impatient O'Carroll; "one might as well talk to that chair!" and he flung out of the room, and in the pet of the moment, drew the door after him with a violence which jarred the whole house. A loud laugh, which echoed from the parlor, announced that the Major's reverie was completely banished by the noise, and recalled to the Captain's lips the smile of good humor which his native impetuosity had for a minute chased from them.

When he entered Captain Talbot's room, he found him sitting in an easy chair before the fire, and Catherine and Amelia occupying seats on each side of him.

"The weather is clearing, Miss Courtland," he said, breaking at once upon their conversation, "and I hope the Colonel will perform his promise."

Talbot and Amelia looked towards the window with a sort of careless indifference, which seemed to say, they were happy enough without any addition to the party. But Catherine's countenance lighted up with pleasure, and she rose and walked to the window, at which O'Carroll had stationed himself.

"See," he said, "it is quite bright in the west, and there is some one coming up the avenue this moment. It is Grahame himself," he added, as the horseman drew near, and assured that he was not mistaken, he quitted the room to receive him. Catherine, however, saw immediately that it was not the Colonel, and the uncertain twilight prevented her recognizing his servant; but in a few minutes O'Carroll entered with a note, containing Grahame's apology, and pleading as his excuse for not visiting them that evening, a sudden engagement which he was under the necessity of fulfilling.

"And this is my reward," said O'Carroll, as he gave the note into Catherine's hand, "for having endured

the vapors of the atmosphere with more patience to-day than I ever did in my life."

"We are all sharers in your disappointment," said Catherine; "but though deprived of Colonel Grahame's society, there are still enough of us here to make the evening pass pleasantly away. I have promised Captain Talbot to spend part of it at least with him."

"I have no fears that time will not pass swiftly and pleasantly enough in such society as I enjoy here," said O'Carroll; "but Colonel Grahame has so recently risen, as it were, from the dead, and we have as yet seen so little of him, that I had permitted myself to anticipate unusual pleasure from his promised visit to-night. However, we can do very well without him, at least till to-morrow; so, if you will excuse me, I will just walk half a mile for the sake of exercise, and be back again directly."

"I would accompany you if it were not quite so damp," said Catherine. "The evening is mild and delightful for the season, and I feel peculiarly inclined to enjoy it after the close confinement of the day."

"It is not so damp as you imagine," said O'Carroll, "and the walking will be perfectly good in the forest path. Cannot you wrap up warm, and go?"

"Do not think of it, Miss Courtland!" exclaimed Talbot. "It must be exceedingly wet after this rain, and you will endanger your health by exposing yourself on such an evening. Were it any one but Captain O'Carroll, who urged you to do so rash a thing, I should be inclined to charge him with thoughtless imprudence."

"Thank you, Talbot," said O'Carroll. "It would, indeed, be preposterous to attribute such a crime to me! and as I am convinced your motives in detaining Miss Courtland, are *entirely disinterested*, I will not stop to investigate them. So adieu till my return."

The heightened color of Talbot's cheek showed that he well understood the meaning smile which accompanied the pointed words of his friend; but he attempted no reply; indeed he had not time to do so if he wished;

for O'Carroll instantly left the room, and sallied forth upon his walk.

He passed through the garden, and emerged from it upon the forest path, which was in all seasons the favorite resort of Catherine Courtland and her guests. It had grown nearly dark, and the moon, which was struggling with the broken clouds that so frequently deform the sky after a storm, shed only a partial and uncertain light over the scene; now for a moment silvering the tops of the tall forest trees, and shining brightly on every object, then again vanishing in clouds which cast over all a shade darker and more dreary, as it seemed, for the momentary brilliancy which had preceded it. As O'Carroll walked slowly forward, his arms folded, and his eyes cast upward, watching the rapid transitions and fantastic forms of the clouds—their edges beautifully silvered with the beams of the moon, over whose orb they gracefully rolled their fleecy volumes, he sunk into a train of sad and tender musing, which led him onwards, heedless of the distance he had gone, and forgetful of the promise he had given shortly to return.

His mind was not framed for sadness; and even in moments of the heaviest affliction, its natural gaiety would often burst athwart the gloom; and though none felt more exquisitely or was capable of keener suffering, it was not by the outward appearance that the world could judge of his internal sensations. Even the most reckless and mirthful have their moments of depression, and the hour, the solitude, the aspect of the heavens, all united to awaken painful reminiscences, which carried O'Carroll back to other days, and tortured him with regrets, which reason in vain had urged him to stifle as unmanly and degrading.

The first time he saw Marion Spencer, she had pointed his attention to the clouds, which exhibited the same restless and beautiful variety, as now. He recalled her very attitude as she stood with him at the window of her father's parlor, one hand resting on the sash, and the other pointing to the heavens, to which her eyes were raised, with a look so lovely, so full of admiration

and delight, that O'Carroll well remembered with what rapture he had gazed upon those soft blue eyes, and how much more beautiful he had thought them than even the bright sky to which they were directed. He dwelt upon the sweet simplicity, the artless confidence which rivetted the love her beauty had inspired, and upon those hours of endearing intercourse which had yielded him so many touching proofs of her attachment, and unveiled to him so many traits of an ingenuous and exalted mind. As these reflections agitated him, he almost persuaded himself, that his own conduct had justly alienated the affection of Marion; and that the coldness and neglect which jealousy had instigated, was the true cause why Mr. Spencer had denied his daughter to a man, who, without alleging any reason, could treat her with such unwarrantable caprice.

From these and similar meditations which had occupied more than an hour, O'Carroll was suddenly startled by the low murmur of voices. He stopped, made an effort to rally his subdued spirits, and looked earnestly around him. The moon, which now rode high in the heavens, leaving far below the grovelling clouds, that for a while had struggled to eclipse her splendor, enabled O'Carroll to discern the two persons whose conversation had disturbed his reverie.

They stood at the distance of a few yards beneath the spreading branches of a pine, and appeared so deeply engrossed as not to notice his approach, which had, indeed, been so slow and gentle as scarcely to depress the moss upon which he trod. Screened by the trunk of a large tree, O'Carroll stopped a moment to observe the persons of the speakers. There was something in the outline of the tallest figure which reminded him of Grahame, and he was almost confirmed in this suspicion on perceiving a moment after that he wore the military hat and plume of an American officer. Surprised out of all precaution, the Captain stepped involuntarily forward to ascertain by a nearer view whether his conjecture was erroneous, when in his haste he struck against the straggling branch of a dead alder bush, which



snapping instantly off, occasioned a noise that drew the attention of the strangers towards him. The officer, for such O'Carroll supposed him, immediately said a few low words to his companion, and then walked hastily away in an opposite direction; while the other with a slow and stately step advanced to meet the Captain. Surprised at these gestures, O'Carroll awaited him in silence, scarcely knowing what to expect; but resolved, if there was danger, to defend himself like a man. Such thoughts, however, were instantly dispelled when he heard the mild and mellow tones of Ohmeina's voice, accosting him in the peculiar phraseology which he was wont to use :

"Friend," he said, "what seekest thou at this hour and in this solitary place? If thou art a wanderer I will direct thee right; but if thou comest hither on an evil errand, remember that the pure eye of the Great Being is upon thee, and repent of thy sin, before thou hast committed it."

"I am only a wanderer, friend Ohmeina," answered O'Carroll. "If I wished to rob or murder, I should seek for richer booty than is to be found in this dark forest. But I am sorry that your quick eye could not discern the friend of your friend from the evil doer, for whom you have mistaken me."

"I knew not that thou didst ever walk here," returned Ohmeina, in evident surprise;" and at this dark hour I know not why thou shouldst seek the gloomy shade of the forest."

"And why not," asked O'Carroll, "as well as you; and there was another with you, Ohmeina. Why then are you surprised to see me here?"

"He came on errands of mercy," said the Chief, with a slow and emphatic accent; "and the forest is my home; where I was born; where my young days were passed. And with the leave of the great and good Being, my age shall decline among its green shades, and there shall death find me, waiting to welcome his approach."

"But who was that, Ohmeina, from whom you just now parted?" inquired O'Carroll, "and who came hither, as you say, upon errands of mercy."

"Ask me not," replied Ohmeina; "it matters not thee to know. Thou didst break upon our privacy, and though I will believe thou didst it without knowledge, thou wilt have too much honor to extort from me what I am forbidden to communicate."

O'Carroll's curiosity was greatly excited by the mystery which the Indian's words threw over a circumstance, which, had he not believed Colonel Grabame to be interested in it, would not have drawn from him a single remark or inquiry. After a few moments of perplexed silence, he said,

"If you are forbidden, Ohmeina, to tell me the name of your companion, still may you not without any breach of confidence, inform me to whom he pays visits of mercy in a place which appears to me wholly uninhabited?"

"He who loves to do good to all mankind," said the Chief, "may find even in the desert objects on which to shed the dews of his benevolence."

"And do *you* dwell here, Ohmeina?" asked the Captain.

"Sometimes I do," returned the Indian, "and sometimes I dwell in the camp. But I have told thee, that the forest was my home. I love the rustling of its withered leaves and the waving of its naked branches, far more than the noise of yonder armed host. They are dearer to me than were the sounds of battle, when, in the days of my power, and the Mohawks were many, I led them forth in terrible array against the enemies of our nation. Our march was like the rushing wind, and our foes fell before us like the trees of the forest which its might hurls to the earth."

The Chief seemed inspired by the remembrance of former days, and he spoke with an eloquence of gesture and expression that excited the admiration of O'Carroll, and rendered him for a moment forgetful of the mystery which had so greatly perplexed him, and which he

wished so much to hear explained. Before he could renew his inquiries, the Indian again addressed him :

"Brother farewell ; I must leave thee. Go thy way, and seek not to follow my footsteps."

"Such a design is far from my thoughts," said O'Carroll ; "I shall not attempt to discover a secret, which you are bound to keep ; and I honor your fidelity too much, to wish you to betray it. Farewell ; there may be mystery, but never falsehood in a heart like thine !"

The Indian laid his folded hands upon his breast, and bent his head towards the earth, then, without uttering a word, turned and walked slowly away. O'Carroll stood for a few moments, watching his retreating figure, and when it was no longer distinguishable, he pursued his homeward way, occupied with far different thoughts from those which had engrossed him during the former part of his walk.

The bitter, yet pleasing remembrance of Marion Spencer, was dispelled by the immediate interest of the scene which had just passed. Perplexed by the appearance of mystery which involved it, he forgot every selfish interest, in his anxiety to account for what was, in reality, inexplicable to him. He felt assured, the person he had seen with Ohmeina, was no other than Colonel Grahame ; and as this conviction obtained possession of his mind, he busied himself in imagining the cause, which could induce him to break a previous and positive engagement, for the purpose of meeting the Indian, in that solitary spot, and at an hour so lonely. But all his conjectures were vain, and served only to involve him more deeply in uncertainty ; and fearing that his protracted absence might occasion alarm, he cast away reflection, and walked forward with a speed which quickly brought him to the garden gate. He met Ronald coming through it, to search for him, and was surprised to learn that it was quite late, and that the family were uneasy at his long absence.

Without delay, he hastened to the house. Major Courtland met him at the parlor door, and exclaimed, the moment he saw him,

"Well, thank Heaven, here you are at last, O'Carroll. But where, in the name of wonder, have you been all the evening. You keep us forever in a ferment with your Irish vagaries, and inconsistencies. Kate has been moping here, this two hours, assured some accident had befallen you; since you left her with a promise of returning directly; and Amelia has gone disconsolate to bed."

"A flattering mode of expressing her concern, truly," said O'Carroll laughing. "But I owe you many apologies, Miss Courtland, for breaking my promise to you, though I know I shall have your pardon and the Major's also, when I relate the cause of my detention."

"You have mine already," said Catherine; "it was yours the moment I saw you return in safety."

"But you have not mine, young man," said the Major, "till I learn what wild goose chase you have been upon now."

"A most singular one certainly, Major," said the Captain.

"What, any more mysterious music," asked the Major. "A second edition of the squaw adventure, O'Carroll?"

"Something quite as surprising," said the Captain.

"Upon my word, O'Carroll," returned the Major, laughing, "you must positively give us the 'American Nights' Entertainment: the legends of Arabia will become tame and unedifying, compared with your marvellous marvels."

"A plain unvarnished tale I will deliver," said O'Carroll, "and you shall give what credit you please to the narration. Only let me request you, Major, to reserve your sarcasm, till I have ended."

"Well, begin, Captain," said the Major, "and I will hear you with the gravity of a Turk, let the story be ever so ridiculous."

"You will be disappointed, if you expect any thing marvellous," said O'Carroll, "The incident, however, is rather a singular one, and seems to throw a mystery around our friend Grahame, which shades the

brightness of the character we have so ardently admired."

Catherine betrayed the emotion caused by this intelligence, by half rising from her seat, and hastily sinking into it again, while first a deep blush, and then an ashy paleness, succeeded each other on her features. The Major also seemed disturbed.

"Grahame!" he exclaimed; "surely you have seen nothing that can tend to sully his immaculate reputation."

"No indeed, sir," returned O'Carroll; "I only said, that perfect openness of character, which we have so much praised and admired, seemed by this adventure to be shrouded in a veil of mystery. But it may all be fairly interpreted yet; at all events, I will give you the circumstances, and you may assist me to construe them."

He then briefly narrated the incidents of his walk, and the conversation, which had passed between himself and Ohmeina. He described the person of the stranger, who, on his appearance, had parted from the Indian, and declared his firm belief that it was and could be no other than Colonel Grahame himself.

Major Courtland and his daughter listened to O'Carroll, without once attempting to interrupt him, and when he ended, the Major, with folded arms, and eyes fixed upon the carpet, walked twice or thrice across the room, absorbed in deep reflection.

Catherine too, remained silent, but she raised a timid glance to her father's face; as if she sought to read there, what was passing in his breast. After another turn through the apartment, he suddenly stopped and said to O'Carroll,

"This is a strange and inexplicable affair, Captain if you are positive it was Colonel Grahame, whom you saw."

"I will not venture my oath upon it," said O'Carroll; "but uniting every circumstance, the tall figure, the military dress, the reluctance of Ohmeina to answer

my inquiries, I think I cannot be mistaken in believing it was the Colonel."

"Ohmeina may love mystery as well as his friend Minoya," said Catherine, anxious to rescue Grahame from suspicion; "and there are many tall men, besides Colonel Grahame; and scarce one, at this warlike period, who is not made several inches higher, by the military cap and plume."

"True, Miss Courtland," said O'Carroll; "but you will grant there are few, very few, who, even in the uncertainty of moonlight, could be easily mistaken for Colonel Grahame. That dignity of air, that unrivalled grace of figure and of motion, which are peculiarly his, render him at once distinguishable. I know not another, who possesses them in such perfection."

"This is but a trifling proof, O'Carroll, and would not be admitted in a court of law," said the Major; "even with me it weighs nothing, since your luxuriant imagination might readily invest some clownish boor with the grace and elegance of our friend Grahame. But your relation has recalled to my remembrance another circumstance, which tends to corroborate your suspicions. I was struck yesterday by the Colonel's embarrassment, when I inquired with whom Minoya resided; and with his indirect refusal to name the family, although I requested it of him. There is certainly some mystery about this young man; Heaven grant, he may have no dishonorable entanglement to render him unworthy of our esteem."

"Impossible, father!" exclaimed Catherine, with involuntary warmth; "you, who have ever been so unwilling to suspect the goodness of others, are over hasty in condemning Colonel Grahame."

"I am far from suspecting him of any deliberate baseness, my dear," said the Major; "but I confess I am not a little perplexed by the circumstances under discussion: That with the plea of an indispensable engagement, he should break his promise to us, and then be seen lurking with Ohmeina on the borders of the forest, seems to me so strange, so unlike all that

we have hitherto seen of his character, that I cannot suppress my astonishment."

"But granting it was he, whom Captain O'Carroll saw," said Catherine, "the Indian said he was on a visit of mercy; some friend, perhaps, required his presence; or some suffering individual, dependent on his kindness, and for whom he thought proper to sacrifice a visit of pleasure to one of sympathy and consolation."

"Your charity is abundant and ingenious, Kate," said her father, smiling; and I hope his own explanation may be as satisfactory. I am the last man who would triumph in the downfall of Colonel Grahame; and even should he not prove himself all that I have, and still do think him, I must continue to look back with pleasure to the hours enlivened by his society, and to remember, with grateful emotion, that it was his hand, which twice arrested the blow, which was ready to fall upon the defenceless head of an enemy and a captive. But he will be here to-morrow, and a few inquiries may then terminate our doubts."

"I think," said O'Carroll, "we had better be silent on the subject, unless it is first introduced by the Colonel himself. We would not wish to pry into actions, which he may have strong motives for concealing. And since he will doubtless learn from Ohmeina, that it was I who interrupted his conversation, he will, I am persuaded, explain the occurrence, if it can be explained satisfactorily and with honor."

"You are right," said the Major. "I would not be guilty of the meanness of extorting a secret, which its possessor is reluctant to divulge. But he must be conscious that he has exposed himself to suspicion, and I think he will be solicitous to banish the doubts he has awakened."

"He cannot honorably reveal the secret of another," said Catherine; "of course, his silence on the subject, should not be imputed to him as a crime. But it is very late, father; and since we are not likely to settle this matter at all to our satisfaction, I will bid you good

night, and leave you to discuss it, till morning, if you please."

She left them, and retired to her own apartment, not to sleep, but to reflect upon the occurrence and conversation of the evening.

But without any guide to the real truth, and without any definite hint to assist her conjectures, they were of course vague and remote from probability; till wearied by the hopeless effort to elucidate the mystery, which seemed gathering around the hitherto candid and ingenuous Grahame, she yielded to the refreshing influence of sleep, which seldom fails to banish sorrow and anxiety from the pillow of the innocent and young. Her dreams were soothing and delightful, and she would gladly have indulged them longer, but the bright beams of the morning sun, darting through the curtains of her bed, at length dispelled the illusions of the night, and recalled to her remembrance the incidents of the preceding evening.

Impressed with the belief that Colonel Grahame would pay them an early visit, she immediately arose, and awaking her cousin, they shortly left their apartment, and entered the breakfast room together, where they found the Major and O'Carroll waiting their appearance.

After breakfast, the gentlemen paid a short visit to Captain Talbot, who was fast convalescing, and then ordering their horses, went out to ride; the Major, as he left the house, bidding Catherine detain Colonel Grahame to dinner, should he make his appearance before they returned.

Catherine readily promised compliance with her father's desire; indeed she was not herself aware, with what impatience she anticipated Grahame's arrival, till Amelia made her sensible of it by inquiring what she saw so very interesting from the window, towards which her eyes were continually turned. Catherine blushed, and made some confused remark upon the brilliancy of the morning, which was so delightful after a day of clouds and rain. She then, to elude her



cousin's scrutiny, proposed a visit to Captain Talbot, and they repaired together to his apartment.

But Catherine was too restless to remain long stationary, and pleading some trifling excuse, she soon returned to the parlor, leaving Amelia reading to Talbot; a task, which the young man would have transferred to her cousin. But, in truth, Catherine began to observe the pleasure which her presence gave him; several little incidents of the preceding day had revealed to her the state of his feelings. She had marked, with pain, the flushing of his cheek, and the lighting up of his whole countenance, when she addressed, or even when she approached him; and had, more than once, been startled by an expression of his sentiments too pointed to be misunderstood.

Feeling herself unable to return his affection, she forbore to encourage it, and resolved, by every possible means, consistent with delicacy and generosity, to check its progress, and spare him the pain of a final rejection. She determined to visit him less frequently, and never alone, and to confer on Amelia the task, which she knew was far from disagreeable to her, of soothing and entertaining the invalid. But her father, who saw and highly approved Captain Talbot's sentiments, was constantly making some excuse for sending her to him; and on the preceding evening, had insisted that she should remain with her cousin in his apartment.

Captain Talbot's attachment to Catherine, had commenced during the former part of their acquaintance, and he had made Colonel Dunbar (the particular friend of his father) the confidant of his passion and his hopes. From his brother-in-law, Major Courtland had learned the state of the Captain's affections; and delighted with the prospect of a union so advantageous for his daughter, he had, previously to his departure for the north, encouraged the young man's visits, and now augured the most happy result to his wishes, from the circumstance of his becoming a member of his family circle.

It was noon before the Major and O'Carroll returned from their ride, and they expressed no little surprise, when informed that Colonel Grahame had not yet made his appearance. Catherine had employed herself about a hundred different things, and thrown them all successively aside, till vexed with herself, that she was capable of feeling so deeply the disappointment of Grahame's continued absence, she took up the book which she had just laid down, and resolved to think only of its contents. But she had read several pages, without comprehending a word that they contained, and was beginning to re-peruse them, when her father and O'Carroll entered the parlor.

"What, alone, Kate!" said the Major, with some surprise. "Pray, where is your cousin?"

"With Captain Talbot, sir," replied Catherine, closing her book as she spoke.

"With Captain Talbot!" he repeated. "Did they wish for a tete-a-tete, or is your's a voluntary banishment?"

"It is voluntary, father," replied Catherine. "To confess the truth, Amelia was reading an old romance which I had no mind to hear again, and so I stole away to amuse myself here."

A look of displeasure for a moment shaded the Major's countenance, but it quickly vanished when O'Carroll said,

"And so, Miss Courtland, Hugh tells me the Colonel has not been here this morning."

"No," said Catherine, "but it is not impossible we may yet see him before night."

"It is not probable," said the Major; "and I confess his continued absence looks rather suspicious."

O'Carroll shrugged his shoulders as he said, "Perhaps we may find him in the forest again."

"Are you going to search," inquired the Major, observing the Captain move towards the door.

"No," he said; "I have not a particular fancy for the gibbet, and shall not, of course, act the part of a spy. I am going to the stable, Major, for Ronald tells me

what I was so careless as not to observe, that Juno's hind foot is sadly cut by the ice."

"It was almost sharp enough to cut through horn, when we went out," said the Major. "But I have some little skill in farriery, and will go look at it with you."

They left the room together, and Catherine resumed her book. She was glad to be again alone; for she was reluctant to hear Grahame censured; and perplexed by the vague and incessant surmises of her father and the Captain.

## CHAPTER II.

From her calm eye  
Beamed a dark majesty, that well beseeemed  
A Chieftain's daughter; though her willing hand  
Slighted no labor, which their customs rude  
Imposed on woman.

*Traits of the Aborigines of America.*

THE remainder of that day passed away without bringing Colonel Grahame; the following evening arrived, and still he continued absent; when, as the circle had drawn around the blazing hearth, and were discussing with renewed interest, the singularity of his protracted absence, the parlor door opened, and the subject of their conversation unexpectedly entered.

The Major and O'Carroll both rose to receive him; and they both at the same moment bent on him a scrutinizing glance, as if they sought to read his very soul. But his countenance was calm and bright; and returning their salutation with his accustomed ease, he walked towards the ladies, and after the usual compliments, expressed his regret, that peculiar circumstances should for several days past have compelled him to forego the

pleasure of their society ; a pleasure, he added, looking expressively at Catherine, of which it was not necessary to be deprived in order to make him feel its true value."

This was said without the least embarrassment, and with an air of calm self-possession which seemed to set suspicion at defiance.

Catherine was rather confused by an address so pointed, and which she had so little reason to expect, and she did not immediately reply. Her father observed it, and wishing to afford her time to recover, said to the Colonel,

"I did not suppose, that in this season of inaction the duties of the camp could be so very pressing as to detain you from us thus long."

"We are not quartered in the warmth and luxurious plenty of a city," replied Grahame ; "and I assure you, sir, our comfortless situation renders our duties both arduous and many. Though I did not in this instance intend to plead professional duty as my excuse."

"Ah, I understand you, Colonel," said the Major, hoping by a little innocent finesse to arrive at the truth of the affair. "No need of confession, my dear sir," he added, smiling ; "love and glory are inseparable, you know ; at least in the heart of a young soldier."

Grahame colored and bit his lip, but instantly replied with an air of gravity, "My engagement, sir, was of a less pleasing nature than you imagine. But you know my feelings too well to require the assurance that nothing less than an absolute duty could have prevented my appearance here yesterday ; a pleasure which I prize too highly to resign for any trifling cause."

"The disappointment could not have been more grievous to you than it was to us," said O'Carroll, exchanging a significant glance with the Major. "All our resources failed us," he continued, "and Miss Courtland's plants were nearly demolished by our frequent visits to the window, in the vain hope of espying your courser's feet advancing hitherward."

"I am to thank you then, Captain, for shaking the roses from my favorite bush," said Catherine. "I

reproved Juba for it, and after all the poor fellow is innocent of the transgression. The next time Colonel Grahame finds it convenient to disappoint us of several visits, I will take good care to have a free passage made for you to the windows."

"Do not trouble yourself to do that," said O'Carroll; "for I will promise the next time to move by them with as much caution as you do yourself; though, if I mistake not, Miss Dunbar charged you with brushing them too quickly this morning, when we heard a horse coming up the avenue; and after all it was only my knave, Ronald."

Catherine blushed deeply, but when she met Grahame's eye fixed earnestly upon her, vexed as she was with the mischief-loving O'Carroll, she made an effort to shake off her embarrassment, and said gaily,

"Yes, I often shake them in my haste as roughly as the rude breezes of the north."

"Nay, like the 'sweet south, stealing and giving odour,'" exclaimed O'Carroll; "mine was the blustering touch of Boreas, scattering their sweets, and blasting the fair promise of their opening blossoms."

"But you left enough to form a very fine nosegay," said the Major, "for I saw Amelia laden with pinks, and roses, and geraniums, crossing the hall this morning; and when I afterwards visited Talbot, I found him decked out like a favored Zephyrus with the gifts of another Flora."

"Catherine was the Flora, uncle," said Amelia eagerly, but with a varying complexion; "for it was she who sent the flowers to Captain Talbot, and it was for her sake that he wore them."

"It was for their own sake that he wore them, cousin," returned Catharine, not in the least disconcerted, though aware that both her father and the Colonel were intently observing her. "Or perhaps," she added gaily, "it was in compliment to the nymph from whom he received the fragrant offering, that he cherished them with so much care."

Amelia affected not to hear her, and continued caressing the dog, without making any reply.

"And I am falsely accused after all," said O'Carroll, "since the roses met with a gentler fate than that of being shaken rudely from their stems. Pray, Miss Courtland, are your bushes often rifled for a similar purpose?"

"Always when I can gratify a friend with their sweets," returned Catherine. "Captain Talbot is passionately fond of flowers, and I am happy that my blooming shrubs have enabled me to gratify his taste. I have even cropped my finest blossoms for him, since I saw that they contributed to his enjoyment, without regretting for a moment the short-lived beauty of the flowers, whose gradual unfolding I had watched with such solicitude."

"Captain Talbot is an enviable man," said O'Carroll, "to be the object of such delicate and kind attentions."

"There can be no attentions too kind or too assiduous, which tend to cheer the languor and depression of illness," returned Catherine. "I have always been so happy as to enjoy uninterrupted health, and to me the confinement and monotony of a sick room appear so wearisome, that I am desirous to do every thing which may promote cheerfulness and animate the spirits of the patient. Even the fragrance and beauty of a flower may incline to pleasant thoughts; and I dare say you have yourself found it so, Captain O'Carroll."

"You are a good girl, Kate, and the best nurse in the world, as I can testify from long experience," exclaimed the Major. "And I am glad, my dear, your weeds are like to serve so good a purpose, for they have become quite useless to you, now that you no longer want an occasional bouquet to complete your gala dress. Fighting is the fashion of the day, my girl, and balls and parties have grown quite obsolete."

"You are mistaken, Major," said O'Carroll, "they do little else than dance and feast in the city, as Talbot informs me. There are scores of bright eyes, and no lack of gallants in the garrison; and they have gaiety

and revelling in abundance ; for the officers and their ladies, who are exiled from the pleasures of St. James', are resolved to hold a court as gay, if not as splendid, on the banks of the Delaware."

"And the more shame for them," muttered the Major in O'Carroll's ear.

"Speak it out, Major," cried the Captain; "Colonel Grahame will not question our loyalty because we censure the inaction of our party. Shame to them, I say, for consuming that time in mirth and revelry which should be devoted to vigorous resolves and efficient action."

"One would suppose," said Catherine, "the unexpected attack upon Trenton an event too memorable to be soon forgotten. An ill-timed security changed their fortune when it was far more prosperous than at present."

"They are too wise in their own conceit," said the Major, "to be warned by experience, and they will go on eating and drinking, revelling and making merry, till the enemy are at their gates, and their leaders are dragged from their beds, as Prescott was at Newport by the rebel Barton."

"They despise us too much," said Grahame, "to cherish any fears of that kind ; and in possession of our capital, they feel assured that a single effort, made whenever they please, will crush us, and give them the sway of the whole country."

"They have thought so before," said Catherine ; "they have talked, too, of sending a *few* regiments to crush the rebellion ; but as yet, with all their force, they have not been able to subdue the spirit or the power of American freemen. We are descended from Britain, father, and we inherit too large a portion of her pride and noble independence, tamely to submit to slavery."

"And who that now heard you, Kate," said the Major, "would believe you to be the daughter of a British officer, who had shed his dearest blood in defence of the land which gave him birth ? Who would not smile to hear you pride yourself in your descent from that coun-

try which you have voluntarily renounced, and to whose righteous cause you daily wish defeat."

"Father, I have noble examples to uphold me in speaking as I do," said Catherine. "Do you not recollect the anecdote which we heard some time since, of the gallant Duke of Buckingham, who, when informed of the battle of Lexington, thanked God that there were yet some veins in the world which beat high with British blood! And I forget the name of the other nobleman, who, on being required to take up arms against America, returned his sword to his sovereign, saying, he had received it to maintain the cause of justice, not that of oppression! Shall I then be thought ungrateful to my paternal soil, because I do not pray for her success when her nobles, her counsellors, her most active and able defenders refuse to aid her in an unjust quarrel?"

"You may repeat the foolish sayings of factious nobles and discontented whigs, Kate," said her father, "but they will not affect the opinions which I have signed with my blood, and am willing, were I permitted, to seal with my death. You are incorrigibly obstinate, even against reason, nature, and education. But enjoy your sentiments while you may; I am persuaded Heaven will never suffer the cause of rebellion to triumph over the lawful supremacy of a just and merciful monarch."

"Since this subject is under discussion," said Colonel Grahame, "I will intreat permission to say a few words in support of the fair and eloquent champion who so nobly advocates the cause of my suffering country."

"Oh, in good truth, Colonel," said the Major, "she stands quite firm enough without any foreign aid. I shall yet see the day when this spirit of whiggism that possesses her, will be expelled by the force of reason and experience."

"The great Earl of Chatham, Major Courtland, has pronounced it a glorious spirit," said Grahame, smiling, "and declared it impossible to conquer three millions of people who are animated by it."

"This love of rebellion, then, if whiggism is not a proper term," said the Major.



"And another of your countrymen, Major, the Earl of Abingdon," said Grahame, "asserts that we are not guilty of rebellion, but have been justly provoked to resistance by the wanton insults of despotic power."

"A turbulent fellow," exclaimed the Major, "who will say any thing to thwart the ministry! There are a thousand such, who sow dissention and stir up strife for the sake of bringing themselves into notice. I tell you, Colonel, the right cause will at last prevail."

"I believe it firmly, Major," returned Grahame; "and it is this hope which supports us under sufferings and difficulties greater than ever a nation struggled with before. It is this, joined to the consciousness that we fight for our homes, our property, our privileges as a people, our rights as individuals, which nerves our arms and encourages our hearts; which enables our poor, half-naked, shivering, houseless, hungry soldiers, to endure with unshaken constancy the rigors and hardships, from which men less confident in the justice of their cause would shrink with horror and affright."

"Men excited by a popular enthusiasm," replied the Major, "will dare any thing, and endure every thing, for the accomplishment of their object."

"That enthusiasm must be well grounded," returned Grahame, "which survives the complicated miseries which abound in the bleak camp at Valley Forge. I am persuaded, Major Courtland, you would be deeply touched with that pure and fervent patriotism which submits without complaint, nay, even with cheerfulness, to the severest personal privations. And you would reverence and admire the illustrious man, who, at the call of his country, has quitted the refinements and elegancies of polished life, and, superior to every weakness, unmoved by the voice of faction, the suggestions of envy, or the whispers of malice, moves steadily on his course, guiding the stately vessel entrusted to his care, slowly, but surely, towards the haven of prosperity and peace."

"There are shoals and breakers in abundance to be passed before this desired haven is attained," said Cap-

tain O'Carroll, who, half shaded by a large screen, re-reclined at ease upon the sofa ; where for the last half hour he had amused himself in watching the several countenances of the speakers. The rapid and eloquent variations of Catherine's, the alternate humor and chagrin visible on that of the Major, and the bright and lofty expression of Grahame's fine features, softening with pleasure, when Catherine spoke, and kindling with the proud feeling of conscious rectitude, when he advocated the cause of his country, and alluded to the venerated leader of her armies, and her counsels, had each in turn attracted the regard and contributed to the amusement of O'Carroll.

Catherine turned towards him with a smile of arch humor, when she heard his voice issue from behind the screen, and said gravely,

" 'Is Saul also among the prophets ?' "

" It is even so," he answered ; " shall I prophecy to thee concerning the things whereof thou hast spoken." "

" No, Captain ; you are one of those who prophecy false dreams out of the deceit of their own hearts," she answered. " But, speaking of prophecy, you remind me of a prediction quite apropos to the subject we have been discussing, and which has become a popular superstition in England." "

" Do not repeat that foolish tale of the jewel, Kate, unless you would be thought more credulous than the veriest gossip in the land," said the Major.

" I repeat it as a singular incident, father, not as affecting my own imagination," said Catherine ; " though many a powerful mind has viewed it as ominous of some national disaster. Perhaps you may have heard of the circumstance to which I allude, Colonel Grahame. After the coronation of the present king, he lifted the diadem from his brow, when the most splendid jewel it contained, fell to the ground, inspiring the monarch and all his court with the most melancholy presentiments." "

" I recollect hearing of the incident," said Grahame ; " and I am not surprised that it should be recalled at the present crisis, with feelings of superstitious awe." "

"No wonder, indeed," said the Major, with an ironical smile; "and those good whigs who dare to speak their minds, liken the splendid jewel to this precious land; and its separation from the crown, say they, is the symbol of that which is to wrest America from her sovereign. It is amusing to see how the spirit of party influences the minds of men, and induces them to bestow importance upon the most trivial and natural occurrences which can be made to bear, however remotely, upon the object of their wishes. This fatal jewel, you must know, Colonel Grahame, was overlooked by the careless artist who examined the regalia previous to the coronation; for it had not been used during several of the preceding reigns, and was of course out of repair."

"Well, father," said Catherine, laughing, "your explanation I must needs think renders the circumstance still more striking, since, if the jewel represents America, we may liken our good king to the incautious artist, who neglected to secure the precious gem, which rivalled all the others in brilliancy and value."

"But it will be reset firmer than ever," said O'Carroll, "and sparkle for many a long year on the royal brow of good king George, and on that of his son, and his son's son after him, if it shall so please Heaven."

"Yes, doubtless, if it shall so please Heaven, Captain," said Catherine; "you know my father often laughs at your qualifying *ifs*, but I think one of them not at all amiss now."

An unusual bustle in the hall interrupted the conversation. Grahame at once comprehended the cause, and said hastily,

"It must be my Indian friends; I have been unparadoxically negligent in not informing you of their intended visit this evening; but present enjoyment had banished all other recollections from my mind. If it is not perfectly agreeable to see them, however, I will appoint some other time for their visit."

"Oh, let us see them now," exclaimed they all, and Colonel Grahame immediately advanced to the door, followed by Catherine and O'Carroll.

Ohmeina and his female companion were standing in the middle of the hall, surrounded by the servants, who, full of curiosity and wonder, were examining their dress, and plying them with questions, half of which were utterly incomprehensible to the comparatively untutored Minoya, who looked towards Ohmeina with an air of reverence, while, with grave and courteous civility, he endeavoured to satisfy the numerous inquiries of the loquacious domestics. They drew back when Colonel Grahame appeared, and Ohmeina, leading his companion by the hand, advanced from the group, and moved with a firm step and stately air, towards his friend.

He was attired in all the splendor of his savage costume; and Minoya's dress, formed of the delicate skin of the young fawn, glittered with ornaments of silver and beads of various colored glass. Her moccasins were wrought with porcupine quills, intermixed with small sparkling beads, and her slender ankles and finely formed arms were encircled with bracelets. Her long black hair hung nearly to the ground, and was ornamented with a wreath of holly, whose dark polished leaves contrasted prettily with the crimson berries which she had tastefully arranged among them. Imitating the gesture of her companion, she laid her hand upon her breast, and bent her head with reverence to the Colonel.

"You are welcome, Ohmeina," he said, motioning them to enter the room; "and you, my kind Minoya; I am happy to show my friends one, whom I love as a sister, and who showed me so many kindnesses, when I was incapable of assisting myself."

As the Colonel spoke, she raised her piercing dark eyes, for the first time, from the ground, and fixed them upon him, with an expression, which lighted up her whole countenance with grateful pleasure. He returned her smile, with one as bright as her own, and taking her hand, led her first to Catherine, and then to the other individuals that composed the group. Every one present was struck with her uncommon beauty. The delicacy of her figure, the native grace of her motions, the dignity and sweetness of her coun-

tenance, drew forth many remarks, and excited the admiration of all. When she had returned the salutations of those to whom Grahame presented her, she approached Catherine, by whom she seemed to be peculiarly attracted, and gazed fixedly upon her.

Catherine smiled, and took her dark hand within her own, whose delicate whiteness seemed almost dazzling, when contrasted with the olive hue of the Indian's.

"We owe you many thanks, generous Minoya, for your kindness to our friend," said Catherine. "I fear there are not many females of my nation, who, in similar circumstances, would have dared to act so nobly."

"He slew those, who killed my husband, my child," she said; "and the Great Being knows Minoya would die to save his life." She stopped abruptly, and rubbing her fingers upon Catherine's hand, which she still held, said to Grahame, with an air of childish delight, "How pretty! how soft! and white as the snows!" Grahame smiled, but ventured not to touch the beautiful hand, held up for him to admire, while Catherine said,

"It has never loosed the fetters of the captive, Minoya, nor saved the life of a friend; therefore, it is not worthy of your praise; but if you like those rings you shall have one, to wear for my sake."

She drew a ring of trifling value from her finger, as she spoke, and placed it upon Minoya's, who received the gift with a smile of pleasure, and examined it with evident delight. In return she took one of bone, curiously cut, from her own finger, and gave it to Catherine. At the same time, she looked at Amelia, with an expression which seemed to say, she wished also to give her some token of remembrance. After a moment's hesitation, she unfastened a bracelet from her arm, and put it round Amelia's; who, much as she admired the beauty of the Indian, could not avoid shuddering at the touch of her dark hand. She however smiled, and joined with Catherine in praising the

trinket, which she took care to repay with one of more value.

Captain O'Carroll, who had been conversing with Ohmeina and the Major, now joined the circle around Minoya. She smiled, when he approached, and said to him,

"Didst thou like the song, which I sung to thee in the forest?"

"Yes, but I should have liked it better," he replied, "had I seen the pretty lips which sung it. But cannot you give us another song, or do you choose always to sing in secret."

"I sing at all times," she replied, "but best, in the forest, when no eye looks upon me."

"But you will sing now, Minoya," said Grahame, "if my friends desire to hear you?"

"Son of the lightning," she replied, "do I not always, as thou sayest! May Minoya die when she disobeys thee."

Colonel Grahame called Ohmeina to join in the song, and he would have taken the chair which O'Carroll placed for him, but Minoya, who seemed averse to so awkward a seat, sunk upon the carpet in a posture more easy and natural to her, and Ohmeina, from complaisance, placed himself by her side.

They then began, first in a subdued tone, which rose gradually higher and stronger, to chant one of their national songs. The sweet and thrilling tones of Minoya's voice, now mingling with the mellow cadence of Ohmeina's, and now heard alone; swelling high and clear, then sinking into silence, produced a species of wild and enchanting melody, as singular as it was new.

"Our music is tame and lifeless compared to this," whispered Catherine.

Grahame smiled, and assured her the charm would not survive the novelty; since it was far too monotonous long to please the ear of taste.

When the song was concluded, the Indians received the thanks and praises of the company. Major Court-

land, in particular, was so highly pleased, that he said to O'Carroll,

"I pardon your superstition, Captain, and do not much wonder, that you should ascribe sounds, of so much power and sweetness, to some dainty spirit of the air, some 'delicate Ariel,' sent to do the bidding of a second Prospero."

Grahame, observing Minoya to look with much curiosity at Catherine's harpsichord, requested her to gratify them with a tune. She complied, and O'Carroll accompanied her with the flute. While she played, the Indians, but particularly Minoya, seemed lost in a trance of astonishment. She watched Catherine's fingers, as they glanced rapidly over the keys of the instrument; but appeared more delighted by the noise, and the strange manner in which it was produced, than with the concord of sweet sounds, made by the skill of the musician; for in the middle of a very beautiful tune, she advanced her fingers cautiously, and laughed aloud when the keys responded to their pressure. Catherine permitted her to handle the instrument, till she was weary, and when at length, she turned from it, and observed a flageolet, which Amelia was carelessly balancing upon her hand, her features brightened, as if she had encountered the gaze of a familiar friend; and taking it timidly from Miss Dunbar, she placed it to her lips, and played part of a popular tune with perfect readiness and propriety.

Every one looked surprised excepting Grahame, who turned over the leaves of a music book in evident embarrassment.

"Who taught her, and where has she learned this?" was echoed by all present.

"The fair lily plays so," said Minoya; then looking at the flageolet, she added, addressing Grahame, "Brother, didst thou bring this hither?"

The Colonel colored highly, and spoke to her in Mohawk, with an air of extreme displeasure. The poor Indian seemed awed by his manner, for she replied timidly in the same language and folding her

hands upon her breast, stood in silence before the Colonel. His features instantly relaxed, and he again addressed her, in a tone of mildness, which restored to her countenance its wonted cheerfulness and animation, and she began to finger the keys of the harpsichord, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt her attention.

But Colonel Grahame did not so readily regain his self-possession; he continued to turn over the leaves of the music book, with a rapidity, which showed that he was unconscious of doing so. The Major and O'Carroll observed him with deep attention, and exchanged between themselves many significant glances. Catherine, too, remarked his embarrassment, and though she would have given worlds to learn the mystery of the 'fair lily,' who was the cause of this extreme emotion, and to hear the interpretation of those few words of Mohawk, which had produced an effect so powerful, she strove to appear unobservant of Grahame's discomposure, and in order to divert her father's attention, carried Minoya towards him, and began to amuse her with the exhibition of some fine pictures. The remainder of the party soon gathered around them, and Catherine was pleased to observe that Grahame was as conversable and animated as usual.

Refreshments were shortly after produced, of which when the Indians had partaken, they prepared to take their leave. In the course of the evening, Minoya had several times heard Catherine admire the holly wreath, which she wore; and before she departed, she disengaged it from her own jetty locks and placed it, with a smile, upon the brow of Catherine. She seemed, indeed, to have taken a particular fancy to the young mistress of the mansion, who, she declared to the Colonel, was more beautiful than the famous Queen Monohootaba, whom six mighty sachems wished to have for a wife, though she had chosen the Chief, who brought her the scalp of her father's murderer.

"A hint Colonel," said O'Carroll, when this was repeated to him, "that you might have aspired to the hand of this dusky Venus, who has enchanted us to



night, without the aid of a magic cestus, had you taken the precaution to preserve the scalps of those blood-hounds, that you sent howling to the shades, at the burning of Ohmeina's city."

"Perhaps the circumstance of my killing Kamaset, may give me favor in her eyes," returned the Colonel.

"You seem to possess that already," said the Major; "for she regards you as a superior being, though I suspect you have a powerful rival in Ohmeina, to whose grave countenance her eyes - make frequent visits, and return with their bright beams so softened and subdued, that it is impossible not to comprehend their meaning."

"A close observer, upon my honor, Major," said O'Carroll; "I thought myself quick in discoveries of this tender kind, but must confess my dulness in this instance. In the first place, I never so much as dreamed of soft emotions arising in such olive-colored hearts; and in the next, I know not by what signs to detect them, where there are no eloquent blushes, no sweet mutations of countenance, to indicate the feelings of the soul."

"What language is half so intelligible, so forcible, so eloquent, as that of the eye!" exclaimed the Major. "You pretend to be a physiognomist, O'Carroll, an observer of passions and emotions; yet complain of a dark complexion, though animated by eyes whose every glance is full of meaning and intelligence."

"The eyes might be living diamonds, for aught I know," said O'Carroll; "but the darkness of the setting robbed them of their lustre."

"You allow my favorite no beauty then," said Grahame.

"Yes, much," returned O'Carroll; "she has a form of exquisite proportions, a natural grace and artlessness, which are charming; and really fine features, though her unlucky complexion prevents the beams of intellect and feeling from being easily discerned; at least, by one, unaccustomed to the Egyptian darkness of her skin."

"What beautiful hair she has," exclaimed Amelia; "so long, and soft; and black as the raven's wing!"

"Yes," said O'Carroll, "I should have admired its black and glossy hue; but I unfortunately recollected having heard, that these ladies of the forest, instead of the perfumed oils used by our fair dames, anoint their locks with the unction of the bear and woodchuck, and I fancied Minoya's was polished with this savory preparation. The holly wreath and crimson berries did mingle prettily with her raven tresses, I allow; but I appeal to the company, if even this simple ornament does not acquire new beauty by encircling a brow of ivory, and shading a countenance, whose every emotion is discernible through the delicate transparency of the complexion."

"You have wrought yourself quite into heroics, Captain O'Carroll," said Catherine; "and a deep blush gave convincing proof of the mutability of her complexion, while she lifted the holly wreath from her brows, and placing it playfully upon his, said,

"Let us see how it becomes you; it is but fair that we should take our turn in criticising."

"Oh, my countenance is more immovable than the marble features of that bust yonder," he said, snatching off the wreath, and throwing it from him. "I never even blushed in all my life, and never expect to."

"And more's the pity," O'Carroll; "for I am sure you have had ample cause to blush, many a time," said Major Courtland.

"Never; never but once, upon my honor," replied the Captain. "And that once, Major, was when Burgoyne surrendered; and then I believe, we all blushed, at least we had reason to."

The Major, who was slowly traversing the room, just then came across the wreath, which the Captain had flung upon the floor, and he expressed his displeasure at O'Carroll's allusion, by tossing it from him with his foot, to the place, where Colonel Grahame stood. O'Carroll smiled at the uniform irritability of the Major upon this subject, while Grahame without appear-

ing to notice it, took up the wreath, observing as he did so,

"This has been too highly honored to be treated thus." O'Carroll and the Major were again engaged in playful badinage, and as Catherine and Grahame examined the wreath, and admired the glossy leaves, he said, in a low and expressive tone,

"Their bright unchanging verdure, which continues fresh and beautiful through all the seasons, seems to me a lovely emblem of that pure and exalted sentiment which unites so many happy hearts, and glows fairer and brighter amidst the changes and adversities of life."

He placed it gently on her head as he spoke; and O'Carroll at that moment approaching, he bade them good evening, and quitted the house before Catherine had recovered from the surprise and confusion which this little incident had caused her.

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### CHAPTER III.

The love of a delicate female is always shy and reserved. Even when fortunate, she scarcely breathes it to herself; but when otherwise, she buries it in the recesses of her bosom, and there lets it cower and brood among the ruins of her peace. *Irving.*

DURING the following week the visits of Colonel Grahame were daily repeated, and his manner was so gay and unembarrassed, that the Major and O'Carroll began to think their suspicions groundless, and to suppose the trifling circumstances which had excited them might all be satisfactorily explained, did not the Colonel consider them too unimportant to claim a moment's notice.

Catherine, indeed, often recalled his confusion on the evening of Minoya's visit, and the more she thought of it, the stronger became her conviction, that there was

mystery connected with it; though she rejected with disdain, the idea that Grahame's probity or honor could be in the slightest degree involved. Gradually, however, she ceased to dwell upon it; for Grahame, when with them, seemed too happy to have any embarrassments, and his looks, his manner, his pointed attentions to herself, spoke a language so dear and flattering to her heart, that, in the absorbing interest of her newly awakened emotions, she had no leisure for suspicion or conjecture. Even the watchful jealousy of Captain Talbot, who, though still an invalid, had joined the family circle, ceased to give her pain. She sought to persuade herself that his frequent depression of spirits was attributable to bodily indisposition, and that the gentle assiduity of his manner towards her was nothing more than the grateful impulse of a heart alive to the obligation of kindness. Unwilling as she was to admit the truth, there were moments, however, when it irresistibly flashed upon her, and caused her the most exquisite suffering. But she felt conscious that she had never by word or look intentionally encouraged his passion, and she strove to treat him with that uniform and ingenuous kindness which she thought must tacitly convince him that her sentiments were those of friendship only, and could never be converted into feelings of a warmer nature.

But we are never so easily deceived as by our hopes; and Talbot, though continually racked with doubt and jealousy, loved too fondly to despair. The smiles of Catherine, and the endearing familiarity of her manners, produced an effect far different from that which she designed; instead of convincing him of the hopelessness of his passion, they served to encourage his hope and increase the warmth of his affection.

There was one, however, who watched with silent, but deep solicitude, the progress of Talbot's love; and, though suffering, as only a heart which loves without hope can suffer—endured with that fortitude, which in the hour of trial the gentle sex are often found to possess, the anguish of unrequited affection, and submitted

without a murmur, to the disappointment of her fondest hopes.

The hereditary estates of Colonel Dunbar and Sir William Talbot were contiguous, and the strictest intimacy had always subsisted between the two families. During the years of childhood, their children had been inseparable companions, and the affection which seemed so strongly to unite them, had induced their parents to wish that in maturer life a voluntary choice might unite the young people in a dearer and more intimate connexion. Though they prudently resolved not to mention such a hope, lest it might influence inclinations which they desired to leave wholly unbiassed on a subject so momentous ; yet it was often the theme of conversation between Lady Talbot and Mrs. Dunbar, even in presence of the little Amelia, whom they deemed too young to comprehend the meaning of their words.

But young as she was, she had sense enough to understand far too much, and to repeat it to her nurse, who never afterwards suffered her to forget it ; but, till she came to years of discretion, used it as a threat ; and whenever the poor child committed an offence, would declare master Talbot should be told of it, and he would not choose a young lady who was so froward and self-willed. Amelia, thus early taught to consider Talbot an object of the first consequence and importance, felt proud of the childish attachment which was so natural, and learned, as she increased in years, to anticipate his returns from school with a fluttering impatience and anxiety ; while the knowledge that they were designed by their parents for each other, gave an awkward embarrassment to her air, and divested her youthful face and figure of those touching graces which are so lovely and attractive.

Talbot was surprised at the blushes, the silence, and restrained manners of his once gay and playful companion, and as her reserve rather increased than diminished, he began to think her quite plain and uninteresting, and wondered that he could have loved her so much, and thought her so pretty, before he went to school.

In the mean time years rolled on, and when his college education was complete, Talbot left England for the continent. Before his return, Amelia had bloomed into lovely womanhood. With her parents she visited the capital, and mingled with the gay, the fashionable, and the elegant; but still her heart turned fondly to the beloved companion of her childhood, and she sighed for the moment which should restore him to her, and in their native shades they should renew those happy hours to which she looked back with emotions of fond regret.

At length he arrived at Talbot Hall, handsome, accomplished, and polished by his intercourse with the world. But, at the first sound of his voice, the timid girl trembled, and returned his graceful and cordial salutation with so much awkward confusion, that the young man, chilled and surprised by her manner, was compelled to think himself an object of peculiar dislike to her. This suspicion daily received fresh confirmation; and feeling it unpleasant to be almost constantly in the society of one who seldom addressed him, and who shrunk blushing from the most common acts of civility, he soon quitted his friends, and repaired to Ireland on a visit to his uncle. Shortly after this period, he embraced the military profession, and his visits to his parents became of necessity brief and unfrequent. Of course, Amelia saw comparatively little of him till they met in America, to which country her father's regiment was ordered soon after the commencement of the war, and whither that of Talbot's followed in about six months.

Unable to divest herself of the embarrasment which his presence created, she again met him with the same appearance of coldness; and the contrast between her restrained manners, and the frank, spirited, and graceful countenance of her cousin, produced an irresistible effect. Amelia observed it with exquisite pain. She saw the delight with which he gazed upon the animated features of Catherine, the pleasure which he felt in conversing with her, and the absorbing interest which seemed to bind him as with a spell of enchantment, whenever she touched the keys of her harpsichord, and accom-

panied it by a voice of uncommon power and sweetness. She would have given worlds for one particle of her cousin's self-command ; but she struggled in vain to acquire it ; and at length convinced that she had no longer a hope of gaining the heart, which unhappily she had been taught to prize too highly, and stung by the consciousness that she had become an object of indifference to the being most dear to her on earth, she no longer made an effort to appear animated ; and whenever it was possible to form an excuse for doing so, absented herself from his society.

It was not till Captain Talbot became a member of the family, after the affair of the skirmish, that Amelia had acquired sufficient self-possession to appear with any composure in his presence. She perceived that Catherine did not return his preference, that her heart was devoted to another ; but she felt that *she* attracted no portion of his regard, and this settled conviction imparted a calm seriousness to her manner, far more interesting than the perpetual blushes, averted eyes, and faltering voice which had before rendered her so unattractive.

Catherine loved her cousin too much not to perceive with regret, the state of her affections. She would not, however, permit herself to view the case as a hopeless one ; and sensible that none could intimately know without loving Amelia, she took every opportunity to display to Talbot's observation, the goodness of her heart and the beauty of her mind, in the hope that his affections, when weaned from herself, might rest themselves upon her cousin. Amelia never mentioned her unhappy love, and Catherine delicately forbore the most remote allusion to it ; but Amelia felt that it was known to her cousin, and she often blushed to find herself always appointed to administer to the amusement or the comfort of the invalid, sensible of the motive which assigned her so pleasing an employment, and too happy in performing the task to be able to decline it.

On her own account, as well as on her cousin's, Catherine selected her to perform every kind and gentle

office during the Captain's illness, and uniformly absented herself from his apartment as much as was consistent with the hospitality of a hostess. The morning nosegay was presented by Amelia, her voice was the first that inquired after him on rising, and the last that saluted him before he retired. It was she who administered his medicines, who presided at his solitary repasts, who read to amuse him, and who, in short, was ever hovering near to cheer and sooth his hours of solitude and suffering.

Talbot often felt a pang of disappointment and regret when he looked round, expecting to see Catherine's bright face, and met only the pensive glance of Amelia; but he always checked this feeling, lest its expression, even on his countenance, should wound the gentle girl, who was so assiduous in promoting his comfort. He could not but be grateful for her kind attention, and he began to feel the sentiments of early friendship revive in his heart. He thought her much prettier than she had appeared to him before his illness, and sometimes fancied that she had caught a few of her cousin's graces. Once, too, when he ventured to speak of her father, and alluded to the happy days of their childhood, he thought her almost lovely, as her eyes filled with tears, and she looked upon him with a smile of tender pleasure.

Major Courtland was chagrined to observe, that his daughter left so many gentle offices to another which she should have performed herself. He was perplexed to account for the indifference with which she received the admiring homage of a man so entirely worthy of her regard, and so formed by nature to captivate the most fastidious heart. But unskilled in the caprices of the gentle sex, he resolved to wait yet longer before he questioned her on the subject; assured that Talbot would make proposals before he quitted the house, to which, even with Catherine's lofty feelings on marriages of convenience and affection, he thought she could make no reasonable objection. But the Major's sanguine hopes were soon chilled, and he trembled lest they were destined to be utterly destroyed.



He began to view with suspicion and alarm the devoted attentions paid by Colonel Grahame to his daughter, and with extreme chagrin, he read in her expressive countenance the pleasure with which they inspired her; a pleasure which he could never perceive that she derived from those of Captain Talbot. With the anxiety of parental affection, he closely observed her till not a doubt existed in his mind of the hopelessness of Talbot's suit, and the decided preference which she gave to Grahame. Disappointed in his fondest hopes, he was uncertain how to act. He was too generous to treat with coolness the man to whom he owed so many obligations, whose virtues and talents bestowed on him a nobility, which exalted him far above the adventitious circumstances of rank and wealth, merely because he possessed a heart susceptible to the power of those attractive charms which made him the proudest and the happiest of fathers.

And yet to renounce the hope of a union with one possessed of rank, and wealth, and influence, the son of a baronet, with a peer's coronet in reversion, and give his daughter to a plain unpretending republican, a rebel too, whose sword was red with the best blood of Britain,—it was intolerable, and his aristocratic pride could not endure the thought. Yet he dreaded to thwart the wishes of his child; to chase away those smiles which were his delight, and shade the brightness of that open brow which had never yet been saddened by sorrow or disappointment.

He hoped her prepossession was not so firmly fixed as to resist his wishes; at all events it would be time enough to speak with her upon the subject, when one, or both of the rival lovers should have made known their pretensions.

Catherine in the mean time, unconscious of what was passing in her father's mind, saw every object through the enchanted medium of her own feelings, and fancied every heart as light and gay as her own; though, perhaps, if she had analyzed the nature of its motions, she would have found cause for more serious reflection than she was now disposed to indulge.

She welcomed the approach of Grahame with eyes full of pleasure ; the hours which he passed with her flew on wings of down ; and if ever the radiance of her countenance became for a moment saddened, it was when his parting footsteps died away upon her listening ear, and she sighed from the consciousness that so many long hours must intervene before they again met.

One evening, the usual hour of his appearance had passed by, and Catherine, more disappointed than she chose to acknowledge, refused to join the card table, round which the rest of the circle were assembling ; and taking a book she seated herself at her work table, in a corner of the apartment, remote from observation or inquiry. But its pages were lifeless and uninteresting ; and soon throwing it aside, she rose and, almost unconsciously, walked towards the window. O'Carroll observed her, and read the secret of her abstraction. With that spirit of mischief, which he loved so well to indulge, he gaily exclaimed,

"Do you find the flowers peculiarly fragrant to night, Miss Courtland ; I observe you are attracted towards them more frequently than usual."

"Do mind the game, O'Carroll," said the Major in a petulant tone ; "how do we stand now?"

"Six to their one," returned the Captain, arranging the counters ; "we shall win the stake Major."

"Yes and quickly too, if Talbot plays at that rate," said the Major ; "why man, you have trumped over your partner twice, and now have followed your adversary's lead."

Talbot bit his lip, and Amelia suppressed a rising sigh, while Catherine, painfully conscious that she was the cause of his false play, returned to her seat, and took up her netting. But the silk broke, and when she had joined it, it became knotted and entangled ; and throwing it by, she resorted to her harpsichord for amusement. This, however, was out of tune, at least she fancied so, and as a last resource, she took up the flageolet, which she touched with much skill and sweetness. She had once played the tune, which Mi-

noya, on the evening of her visit, had imperfectly performed, and was again repeating it, when Colonel Grahame suddenly entered.

He first saluted her, then after paying his compliments to those around the card table, took his seat beside her, and requested her to favor him with the beautiful air, which his entrance had interrupted. She hesitated, for she imagined he had not recognized it, and feared it might awaken those emotions, which had agitated him, when Minoya played it. But he pressed her with so much earnestness, that she could not avoid compliance, and she had no cause to regret it, since her fears were not verified. Grahame listened with breathless attention, and without discovering any other emotion than that of extreme pleasure.

"It is a favorite air of mine," he said, when she had finished, "and though I have often heard it played by skillful lips, it never before sounded half so sweetly as now."

Low as was the tone, in which he spoke, his words did not escape the ear of the ever watchful O'Carroll, who thinking it a good opportunity to unravel the mystery connected with Minoya's knowledge of the instrument, said with affected carelessness,

"That is the tune, I think Colonel, which your Indian friend plays; a rare accomplishment for a savage, truly!"

Grahame looked rather disturbed, but replied directly,

"You forget that she is nearly civilized, Captain; and, perhaps, are not aware that these Indians imitate, with wonderful facility, whatever pleases their fancy, and are readily taught the arts and even the accomplishments of life."

And did you, Colonel, or Ohmeina, teach her to play upon the flageolet, with so much sweetness," asked O'Carroll, with an air of nonchalance.

"I really thought her performance quite miserable and imperfect," said Grahame.

"Did you so;" returned O'Carroll. "Then I suppose she had no instructor but Ohmeina, who having taught her to pipe upon a reed, she found it no difficult matter to blow through the hole of a flageolet."

Grahame made no reply, evidently to the disappointment of O'Carroll, who by some farther observations, attempted to renew the subject. But the Colonel disregarded his remarks, or answered them, with a brevity and coldness, which showed him displeased with the inquisition of O'Carroll, and resolved not to gratify his curiosity.

Catherine, urged by Grahame, again touched the keys of her harpsichord, and found them more attuned to harmony, than she had fancied them, before his entrance. He joined his voice with hers, in many of his favorite airs, and, in the intervals of music, their conversation, their attention, their thoughts even, were devoted so exclusively to each other, that they seemed unconscious of the presence of any other persons.

O'Carroll had gradually become so deeply interested in the game, as to confine his attention entirely to it; but the Major remarked, with pain, the abstraction and uneasiness of Captain Talbot, and but too well informed of the cause, he felt excessively vexed by the mutual enjoyment, which Grahame and Catherine appeared to derive from their uninterrupted *tete-a-tete*.

Supposing themselves quite disregarded by the card party, they felt no longer the necessity of that disguise, and reserve, which involuntarily restrained them, when Catherine imagined that Talbot's jealous eye was upon her, and Grahame, that O'Carroll was watching every word and look, which might furnish him food for raillery, or a subject for grave remark and animadversion. Their conversation was losing its desultory character, and becoming serious and deeply interesting, when it was suddenly interrupted by the abrupt entrance of Ohmeina, whom Hugh ushered without ceremony into the parlor.

With his usual profound gravity, but somewhat less than his accustomed moderation, the Indian saluted the

company, and then advancing to the Colonel, commenced speaking in the Mohawk tongue, with an earnest and rapid utterance. Grahame's attention was instantly rivetted, and an expression of concern and anxiety marked his features, as Ohmeina continued speaking. When he ceased, the Colonel answered him briefly, and then prepared to take his leave, observing only, that he regretted being compelled to quit his friends at so early an hour. He then bade them good night and departed.

It was however, much later than he imagined, and as the last game at cards was just concluded, they agreed to break up the table. For the last hour, no one excepting O'Carroll had enjoyed the amusement, and his inclination for playing longer, was now entirely superseded by his intense desire to know the purport of Ohmeina's message, which had at once changed the animated expression of Grahame's countenance, and called him so abruptly from them. He hazarded a thousand wild conjectures, which he was suffered to express without interruption. The Major however, who in uncommonly ill humor was rapidly traversing the apartment, at last exclaimed, with an air of bitterness,

"For a man of truth, honor, and courage, this redoubtable Grahame is shrouded in a great deal of mystery! I confess I do not like it at all; I feel my confidence very much weakened by the night walks, the broken hints, cloudy looks, and above all, by the gibberish of this barbarous Mohawk, which sounds like the very language of treachery and darkness."

Catherine, persuaded that whatever mystery might appear to surround Grahame, he was too virtuous and too honorable to be concerned in any unworthy transaction, and that the suspicions of her father, were of course unjust, felt hurt by the harshness with which he had expressed himself, and raising her eyes calmly to his darkening brow, she said,

"Perhaps, sir, the circumstances, which appear mysterious in Colonel Grahame's conduct, are such as it

would be improper for him to explain to us. They may affect the interests of his country. In any event we have no grounds for supposing them of a personal nature ; and being prisoners of war, cannot expect to be admitted to share the secrets of the American camp."

"It is a strange kind of military discipline," replied the Major, with an ironical smile, "which sends an officer half a dozen miles, on a cold night, to talk with a half civilized Indian, in a dark forest, when one would think he might say all that was necessary, especially if it concerns the public good, in his own tent. It is stranger still, this playing of flageolets, this concealing of names, this coloring and hesitation ! No, Kate ; all the arguments in the world will fail to persuade me there is not something wrong in this business ; and much as I owe to Grahame, and greatly as I have, and still do admire his talents and his courage, I must harbor my suspicions, till I find more cause than I am like to have at present, for their dismissal. Trust me, this nonpareil of ours has a touch of frail mortality, as well as the rest of us."

Catherine leaned her head upon her hand, and remained silent ; for she saw, by her father's countenance and manner, that he was in no mood for pleasant argument, and she was aware that her defence of Grahame would only serve to increase his irritation.

O'Carroll, wary and observing, easily penetrated the cause of Major Courtland's ill humor ; he had marked its progress, from the moment of Grahame's entrance ; and observed it to increase, with every glance he cast towards the harpsichord, till it reach its climax, as the color heightened on Talbot's cheek, and the smiles became brighter on those of the Colonel and his daughter.

It was indeed, galling to the Major's pride, that Catherine should prefer the attentions of a *rebel* officer to those of a brave and loyal soldier ; but that she should view this *rebel* with complacency, while he labored under suspicions which involved his character in mystery, and neglect the affection of a virtuous and honorable man, filled him with displeasure and anxiety.

The sudden entrance of Ohmeina, and the departure of the Colonel, without assigning any explicit reason, completed his chagrin.

O'Carroll, finding the gloom of the party quite uncongenial with his feelings, took up his hat, and as the evening was clear and bright, sallied forth upon a walk. Talbot spiritless, and depressed by doubt and jealousy, soon after retired; and Catherine was left alone with her father and Amelia. The latter had ample food for sad reflection; and imagining, from her uncle's seriousness, that he might wish to converse alone with Catherine, she glided from the room unheeded by her cousin, who in a pensive attitude, which she was seldom seen to assume, pursued her meditations, for some time, in uninterrupted silence.

Major Courtland, with quick and hasty steps, which evinced the discomposure of his mind, pursued his walk through the apartment. He several times looked earnestly at his daughter, as if desirous to address her; then turned away, with an air of hesitation, and again almost in the act of speaking, approached her.

The neglected fire was nearly extinguished, and the remaining brands were mouldering into ashes, when Catherine, reminded by the chilly air of the apartment, that the hour must be unusually late, rose from her seat to retire. Major Courtland understood her intention, and feeling that the opportunity must not be lost, his anxiety to converse with her, conquered the repugnance which he had felt to give her pain. The irritation of his mind had subsided; but the anxious feelings of the father were more keenly alive than ever; and as his daughter bade him good night and turned to quit the room, he gently took her hand, and leading her back to the sofa seated himself beside her.

"Indulge me a few moments longer, with your society, my dear Catherine," he said. "It is late, I know, and the time which we might have spent in confidential intercourse has been consumed in sad and silent meditation."

"Silent, but not sad, my dear father," said Catherine, somewhat startled by the seriousness of his manner. "Why should it have been sad? we have nothing to make us unhappy."

"I have many anxious thoughts to make me so, my dear girl," said her father. "But since the enlargement of our family circle we know too little of each other; that delightful intercourse, which was once so dear to us both, seems quite suspended, and I sometimes fear that other objects have stolen from me those affections, which have been the balm and solace of my life."

"My dearest father," exclaimed Catherine, "what objects can ever supplant you in my affections? none surely; to you I owe my first earthly duties, and happy in your love, what else have I to wish for?"

"Nay my child," returned the Major; "I am not so unreasonable, so irrational, as to expect that I shall always be the first and only object of your tenderness. I have neither the right nor the inclination to require this of you. I ask, I wish only to retain that filial confidence and affection, which have made me the happiest of fathers. I know that nearer and more tender claims must one day, be made upon your heart; and I would have it so. I would wish to see my Catherine filling those sacred offices, and performing those endearing duties, which her mother fulfilled with such undeviating rectitude and fidelity. I would wish to see her form the happiness of a virtuous and honorable man; and it would gladden my heart to know, that when her natural guardian shall be called to forsake her, he may leave her in the arms of one, who will cherish her in his bosom, and be to her a father, guardian and friend."

"My dear father," said Catherine, affected by the earnestness of his manner, and unable to determine for what purpose he thus addressed her; "why do you speak to me so seriously upon this subject? It is one, upon which I have scarcely yet thought; upon which, at present, I have no occasion to think."



"It is for that very reason, my love, because you have not yet thought of it," said the Major, "that I now venture to press it upon your notice. I fear, my dear girl, you are sadly ignorant of your own heart, and I wish to awaken you to an examination of it; I wish, if possible, to learn from your own lips that my fears are premature and groundless.

"Father, I do not comprehend you," replied Catherine. "I find nothing in my heart which threatens its peace or ought to alarm your fears; nothing that I would not willingly have you know, as you have known all my thoughts and emotions since I was capable of repeating them to you."

"And is there nothing in the eloquent language of Colonel Grahame's countenance, nothing in the unequivocal tenderness and devotion of his manner, which ought to alarm you?" asked her father. "Can you see him, and not be conscious of the love which he makes no effort to conceal! and can you tacitly permit and encourage this love without asking your heart, who is this, to whom I am yielding my earliest affections, and to whose trust I am committing my dearest hopes of happiness? Catherine, I have watched with the deepest anxiety the dawning and the progress of this fatal passion; and as a friend, as a father solicitous for the welfare of the object dearest to him in life, I think it my duty to warn you of your danger; and to entreat you to deliberate before you resolve to sacrifice the peace of your future days to the impulse of a youthful, but ill-judged affection."

Catherine did not immediately reply; she bent her head upon her bosom, and burning blushes crimsoned her face. The veil which had so long hidden her heart, was suddenly rent away, and she was overwhelmed by the secret it revealed. Still unwilling to believe the emotions which she felt for Grahame were of the nature which her father apprehended, she sought to attribute them to a less tender cause, and rapidly recalled every instance of his kindness which demanded a grateful return, and the peculiar harmony of their sentiments on

many, and certainly on' one important subject, which chiefly led her to delight in his society. With the sophistry of a heart which tenderly loves, yet fears to acknowledge even to itself that it does so, Catherine having thus explained to herself the nature of her sentiments for Grahame, looked up, and replied, in a calm voice,

"Why, my dear father, because you see me take pleasure in the society of a rational and well informed man, should you suspect me of cherishing for him any sentiments more tender than those of friendship and esteem? We owe Colonel Grahame much, and you have ever taught me to esteem the brave, the virtuous, and good. Our opinions, it is true, are similar, and of course we feel a pleasure in conversing with each other, which cannot exist where there is great diversity of sentiment and feeling. The ardor of his character, which prompts him to express himself enthusiastically on trifling points, may have led you into error; and the courteousness of his manners, which form so striking a contrast to the formality and reserve of Captain Talbot and the reckless gaiety of O'Carroll, may have induced you to imagine them peculiar and devoted."

The Major looked at her a moment in silence, and firmly and calmly as she had spoken, her eye sunk beneath his steady gaze, and a transient blush flitted over her cheek. He observed it, and the confidence which the earnestness and apparent candor of her words had inspired, was weakened by these symptoms of embarrassment. He knew the purity and ingenuousness of her mind too well to suspect her of intending to deceive him; but he sighed from the painful conviction that she was deeply, he feared fatally, deceiving herself.

"God grant that it may be as you say," he replied; "for I would not willingly have it otherwise. Grahame may be the very soul of honor, and worthy even to possess the treasure of your love; but there is a mystery around him which does not please me, and which no man of delicate feelings would suffer to remain in the

view of friends, were it in his power honorably to dispel it."

"I cannot think it charitable or generous, my dear father," said Catherine, "to condemn an individual for one trifling circumstance, which, though incomprehensible to us, might perhaps be fairly explained, were he at liberty to speak of it: an individual too, whose conduct in every other point of view is unexceptionable, and whose character we well know stands high among his countrymen and intimate friends."

"We do not know enough of the matter to argue upon it," said the Major, coldly; "and therefore we will discuss it no farther, but leave the mystery for time and circumstances to develop. I had several things to speak with you about; but I hear O'Carroll in the hall, and we must defer our conversation to another opportunity. Retire now, my love; you are weary, and the Captain will excuse you."

He kissed her tenderly, and, glad to escape from the gaiety of O'Carroll, which she never felt less inclined to encounter, she hastily quitted the room. She met the Captain as she retreated, but without stopping to speak to her, he hastily entered the parlor, and closed the door after him with violence. Catherine, however, disregarded the peculiarity of his manner, and, absorbed by agitating reflections, passed on to her own apartment.

## CHAPTER IV.

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou comest in such a questionable shape,  
That I will speak to thee.

*Shakespeare.*

WHEN O'Carroll left the house, after the departure of Colonel Grahame, he designed only to stroll for a

short time around the garden; but the uncommon beauty of the evening induced him to extend his walk, and almost before he was aware of having passed the gate, he found himself pacing the familiar path which skirted the borders of the forest. Ruminating on the perplexity of Grahame's conduct, and frequently casting his eye forward, as if he again expected to descry him, again holding a mysterious conference beneath the spreading branches of some stately tree, O'Carroll walked slowly on, and had attained a considerable distance from the garden, when suddenly the sound of footsteps reached him from behind, and he turned quickly round to ascertain who, besides himself, was traversing that solitary path.

The moon was just rising, and by her partial light he discovered, at a few yards' distance, a figure closely wrapped in a large cloak, moving slowly along the path. The idea of Grahame or Ohmeina instantly occurred to him; but a second glance at the person informed him he was shorter and stouter than either of them; and he would of course have then supposed him some idle stroller, who, like himself, had come forth to enjoy the beauty of the evening; but the very uncommon manner in which his face and figure were concealed, the former by a broad brimmed hat slouched completely over it, and the latter by the folds of an ample cloak, awakened his surprise and curiosity. He was struck, too, by finding himself an object of regard to the stranger, who, when he stopped, stopped also, and when he went on, followed him at the same measured distance, without attempting a nearer approach.

O'Carroll was surprised, but felt no fear; for he wore a dirk, with which he knew he could defend himself against the attack of one person. Aware, however, that he might have comrades in the forest, waiting to join him at a given signal, the Captain, though at first resolved to address the man, and demand the cause of his following him, judged it most prudent to return within view of the house before he questioned him, that in case of assault, he might if necessary summon assistance. In

order to effect this purpose, he must either turn directly upon the stranger and pass him in the narrow path, or avoid him by taking a circuitous course, which struck him as wearing an air of cowardice, from which his native courage revolted.

He therefore turned boldly round, and advancing with a firm and lofty step towards his strange pursuer, was just in the act of passing him, when the man turned also and walked in silence by his side. O'Carroll's blood was instantly on fire ; for it was now sufficiently evident that he was an object of pursuit to this person ; and enraged to find his private walks designedly invaded, and his footsteps followed by the impertinent curiosity of an insolent stranger, he turned fiercely towards him, exclaiming in an imperative tone,

"Who are you, sir ? and how dare you follow me with such persevering insolence ?"

"The path is free to us both," replied the man doggedly ; "and I shall walk in it so long as it pleases me to do so.

"But not by my side," exclaimed O'Carroll, still more inflamed by his reply ; "at least, if you value your safety ; for I have a weapon here which has chastised the insolence of many a villain before now, and I will try its temper upon yet another, unless you quickly go your own ways, and leave me free of your impertinence."

"Methinks a man who wears his sword only by sufferance, should not be over zealous to boast of its courage," retorted the stranger, with a sarcastic sneer ; "since, too, he is forbidden to draw it from the scabbard, where his victors have decreed that it shall rest, it is like to do him little service in case of need."

"I am not forbidden to draw it upon insolent villains like you," exclaimed the enraged O'Carroll, and as he spoke he drew the dirk from his belt and turned its glittering point with a threatening gesture towards the breast of the stranger.

But without shrinking from the weapon, he exclaimed in the same tone of cool and provoking irony,

"Strike, Captain O'Carroll! Since you can no longer aid the cause of your insulted country, plunge your steel in the breast of her defenders, and prove that you can as readily forget her love and renounce her interests as you have forgotten the love, the remembrance even, of one who lived but for you, and would have given up her life to save you!"

O'Carroll's arm fell nerveless by his side, and with a look of unutterable astonishment he bent his flashing eye upon the speaker; but the cloak, the slouching hat, the folds of the handkerchief, which was bound around the lower part of his face, and the deep shade of the trees, beneath which they walked, effectually concealed every lineament of his countenance and figure. O'Carroll was distracted with doubt; and unable to endure the suspense which agonized him, he exclaimed in an impassioned voice,

"In the name of Heaven, tell me to whom you allude."

"Is then the name of the gentle Marion, quite forgotten?" returned the man with a tone in which reproach and sarcasm were strangely blended.

"And who are you," asked O'Carroll, almost doubting if he heard aright, or if he were not under the influence of a dream. "How have you become possessed of the history of my life, and for what purpose have you sought me in a manner so singular?"

The man answered only by a laugh, which for a moment chilled the blood of O'Carroll; but the next instant it rushed to his heart with more than usual impetuosity. Inflamed with jealousy and suspicion, he exclaimed,

"Reveal yourself instantly, or stand upon your defence."

He turned towards the stranger as he spoke, who retreated a few steps, and thrusting his hand hastily beneath his cloak, replied,

"I am not defenceless, Captain O'Carroll, and though I have no wish to injure you, I shall make deadly resistance if assaulted. Put up your weapon, and let there be no blood shed in our path to-night."

"Tell me your name, then," said O'Carroll; "by what means you obtained a knowledge of my name and person, and why it is that you follow me. Above all, tell me what you know of Marion Spencer, and why you reproach me with forgetting one whom I have, alas! too faithfully remembered."

"And yet," said the stranger, "you suffer another to rob you of her love, and while you strive to forget her, permit him to win the treasure which you once thought beyond all price."

"I think so still," said O'Carroll, in a tone of anguish; "but she is lost to me forever; I treated her unkindly, and she fled from me to the arms of another."

"I could tell you more on this subject than you seem to know," said the man in a low voice; "but it is an ill service to breed a quarrel between friends, and so the matter had best rest here."

"No, it shall not rest here," exclaimed O'Carroll, his feelings greatly excited by the stranger's words; "you have crept into my confidence, and now you shall not quit me till you have told me the meaning of your insinuations."

"I did not seek your confidence," said the man, "nor did I even speak to you till you first addressed me. I have seen you here many a night before; I have never crossed your path or sought to attract your notice."

"And why have you done so now?" asked O'Carroll, irritated by the mixture of cunning malignity and irony which marked the manner of the stranger. "I know not why you should dog my steps and provoke me to address you, unless you had some design to answer by it. All you have said was not worth so much trouble, and I should have served you rightly at first had I knocked off that slouching hat with the hilt of my weapon, and humbled your insolence with its sharp point."

As if apprehensive that such was now the Captain's design, the man drew back, and instinctively raised his hand to press his hat still more securely on his head; but at the same time he said with great asperity,

"I have told you, Captain O'Carroll, that I had no wish to injure you ; and I still farther inform you, that I would have warned you against one, who has more power to injure you than I have ; but you have chosen to reward my good intentions with unprovoked threats, and now I will leave you to reap the fruits of your injustice."

"I may have been unnecessarily harsh," said O'Carroll ; "but why did you provoke me to it by your mystery, your broken hints, and the suspicious manner in which you sought an interview with me ? I did but act on the defensive, which from appearances I judged prudent. I will only add, if you have really any thing important to communicate, and if your motives are indeed as benevolent and disinterested as you pretend, you will not suffer my unjust anger, or your own resentment to hinder the performance of a duty."

"We have wasted too much time in vain words already," said the stranger, in a tone which expressed the continuance of his displeasure ; "besides you might not like my words, and so it is best to part without exchanging any more."

"Stop, I entreat you," exclaimed O'Carroll, as the stranger turned to leave him ; "you spoke of Marion Spencer, and will you quit me, without explaining your ambiguous allusion to her ! Without informing me, if indeed you know it, what has been her fate, and where she now exists ?"

"She is in safe keeping, depend upon it," said the man, with a diabolical laugh. "But Captain, if we ever meet again, I recommend you to be more civil, if you wish to learn any thing of her. I am not to be bullied by your threats or cajoled by your flattery ; and if ever I shall communicate what, but for your insults, I had proposed to tell you this night, it will be to obtain revenge on one who has injured me, and not to benefit you, to whom I owe no favor. So, good night, go home and dream of the pretty Marion, and the next time you choose this path, leave some of your Hibernian inflammability behind you."



He darted away as he finished speaking, and disappeared among the thick trees of the forest. Vexed and disappointed, O'Carroll stood for a few minutes gazing after him, but feeling how vain would be the attempt to follow him, he turned to retrace his steps home. Just as he did so, a horseman passed rapidly along a narrow lane, which led from the highway through fields and valleys, to the skirts of the forest, where it joined the foot path at the point, near which O'Carroll now stood. By the clear light of the moon, which shone full upon the figure of the horseman, he found no difficulty in recognising Colonel Grahame.

But the Captain was in no mood to speculate upon his appearance, at that time, and in that place; and without attempting to make himself perceived, he pursued his way home, and entered the house, just as the conference between Major Courtland and his daughter was terminating. He found the Major in no very conversable mood; though he seemed somewhat aroused by the singularity of O'Carroll's recital, he did not give that entire heed to it, which it seemed to demand. In truth he had discovered his young friend to have such a passion for adventure, that he forced every incident however trifling to assume the form of one.

He however did not suppose the circumstances, which the Captain now related, to be inventions of his own; but he allowed much for the exuberance of his imagination, and thought it probable, that in due time they would all be explained away, with as little difficulty, as the song of the syren Indian, which had caused them so many weeks of doubt and conjecture.

Though O'Carroll excused the unusual coldness and abstraction of the Major, because, having remarked his vexation in the former part of the evening, he attributed it to the right cause, he could not but feel surprised that his singular recital did not arouse him to an expression of greater interest; but since it failed, he was glad when a pause in the conversation afforded him an opportunity of retiring. Weary with the Major's pensive mood, which did not at all harmonize with his own

state of excitement, he bade him good night, and crossed the hall to Talbot's apartment, resolving, late as it was, to seek his sympathy and counsel.

Contrary to his expectations, he found the Captain still up. A brisk fire was burning on the hearth, and several open letters, with writing materials, were spread upon a table which stood before it.

"Do I interrupt you?" asked O'Carroll, holding the lock of the door still in his hand, and glancing doubtfully towards the table.

"No, I am glad to see you; I have done nothing, can do nothing to-night," said Talbot, as he shuffled the letters together, and threw them into his writing desk. Then placing a chair for O'Carroll, and drawing his own towards the fire, he continued, "But to what cause am I obliged for this late visit?"

"You shall hear with all speed," returned O'Carroll, "and I will be everlastingly obliged, if you can assist me to unravel the mystery, or even to enlighten it by a single ray of probability."

He then circumstantially related the occurrence of the evening, and Captain Talbot heard him with much deeper interest and surprise, than had been manifested by the Major, though he professed himself equally unable to offer any rational conjecture on the subject. The intimate knowledge, which the man had evinced, both of O'Carroll and of Miss Spencer, seemed to them altogether unaccountable. He had spoken, too, of some one, who had the power and wish to injure O'Carroll, and had declared himself to be actuated solely by a desire of vengeance.

The more they considered these and every other circumstance of the interview, the more they were perplexed.

"I cannot enlighten you at all, on this incomprehensible subject," said Talbot at length, weary of discussing it; "and can only advise you to say little about it, and continue to frequent the path well armed; for it is impossible to say what are the fellow's designs; when you see him again, perhaps you may be able to

obtain some more certain information, provided he has any to give."

"And if he has not," said O'Carroll, "I will do something more than brandish my weapon round his head; the villain shall find it has a point, and a sharp one too."

"Nay," said Talbot, "I caution you to profit by his advice, and leave your 'Hibernian inflammability' at home, if you would hope to gain any thing from him."

"Trust me, Captain," said O'Carroll, "I will be as wary as you please, so long as I find my caution like to avail me; but if the villain is playing this trick for his own sport, he shall bitterly rue the hour when he first crossed my path."

"I fear indeed," answered Talbot, "that you will do some rash thing. But recollect, that it will be much wiser, by prudence and moderation to learn the designs of this man, than to destroy all hope of ever knowing what *possibly* may be of importance to you, by a foolish and ill-timed quarrel. For it seems the fellow is as combustible as yourself, and has no mind to brook contempt or rebuke."

"True, he went off like a skyrocket, at last," said O'Carroll; "but I have learned his metal, and promise you to be more cautious in the next interview. But I forgot to tell you, Talbot, that I saw Grahame, just after this knave left me."

Talbot started, as if electrized by the name. It re-awoke those jealous emotions, which, during the past conversation, had been transiently lulled; and before he could reply, O'Carroll, without observing his emotion, continued,

"I know not why Grahame haunts the precincts of this forest so continually; but am inclined to think some object of powerful interest allures him thither."

"Perhaps," said Talbot, and the romantic supposition seemed to sooth his feelings,—“perhaps he has some fair and gentle nymph concealed in its obscure recesses. These rebel officers, with all their stern republicanism, are not entirely free from courtly vices.

Some of them, as I have heard, are dashing gallants, as adventurous in love as in arms."

"Some of them may be," returned O'Carroll; "but Grahame is not one of these. In despite of all the mystery which surrounds him, I would pledge my life, upon his honor. I believe it stainless as his courage, and I must have

"confirmation strong,  
As proofs of Holy writ,"

before I yield to the suspicions, which Major Courtland is so ready to encourage."

"But you are often in and around the forest," said Talbot; "it is in fact, your daily resort; and have you never discovered the place of Minoya's abode? That I should think might lead to some developement of the affair."

"Never," said O'Carroll, "and if the Indians dwell in the forest, they must be sheltered, I think, by a wigwam of their own savage construction. And yet I assure you, I should half suspect Grahame of some tender, though no dishonorable entanglement, had I not strong reason for believing his heart devoted to our fair friend Catherine."

"He love Miss Courtland!" exclaimed Talbot, coloring with resentment; for though he had long been fearful of the fact, he could not endure that another should suspect it, and even venture to speak of it to him,—which seemed, too, like a confirmation of what he would fain have persuaded himself was a jealous imagining of his own heart.

"Yes," returned O'Carroll; "who that observes his manner towards her,—who that witnessed the scene of this evening, can doubt it? I would not wound you, Talbot, by this assertion, but from motives of the purest friendship. Knowing as I do, your sentiments of Miss Courtland, I should esteem myself inexcusable, did I not caution you against the indulgence of a passion, which, I greatly fear, will prove only a source of regret and unhappiness to you."

"Your caution comes too late," returned Talbot; "for I confess to you my affections are no longer under my own control. Perhaps I have reason to despair of success with Miss Courtland; yet I am by no means sanguine in the belief, that Colonel Grahame will prove a favored rival. The high-spirited daughter of the loyal and aristocratic Major Courtland, will never stoop to ally herself with the nameless rebel, whose sword has been turned against her father's breast, and is still crimsoned with the blood of her countrymen and friends."

"But you forget," said O'Carroll, "that this nameless rebel has saved her father's life, soothed his hours of suffering, and softened the shame of his defeat. These are not services to be lightly regarded by such a heart as Catherine Courtland's. Besides, she views him not as a rebel and a traitor, but as the brave defender of an oppressed country, roused to resistance by repeated injuries, and boldly and nobly struggling for the enjoyment of those rights, which an arbitrary monarch would wrest from them. She glories in the spirit which animates this factious people, and is never so animated, as when defending their principles and conduct. I know not, indeed, if her patriotism is sufficiently ardent, to resist the attractions of wealth, high birth, and a conspicuous station; and if not, you certainly stand the best chance to win the prize."

"I would not," said Talbot, "be indebted to my situation, or, indeed, to any outward circumstance, for the attainment of my wishes. But she is superior to every sordid consideration, and I feel assured, that to him only who shall be so happy as to win her love, her heart and hand will be unconditionally given."

"Catherine, to be sure, is a phenix among women," said O'Carroll; "but as it was in the days of Avon's tuneful bard, so it still remains, and we most of us know from experience that,

"Dumb jewels often in their silent kind,  
More than quick words, do move a woman's mind."

"And so do you really think," asked Talbot, awaking from a momentary reverie, "that I ought to renounce, as futile, the hope which I have so long and fondly cherished."

"I did not say that," returned O'Carroll; "I would only have you aware of Colonel Grahame's passion, and of those peculiar circumstances, which conspire with his personal and mental attractions, to make him a formidable rival."

"I cannot,—will not believe it, till Miss Courtland's own lips declare it to me," exclaimed Talbot. "I see nothing so resistless in this man, whom you seem to consider too formidable for opposition; and if the high-bred and elegant Miss Courtland is capable of renouncing country and friends for the rebel Grahame, an act so derogatory and unnatural will do much to blunt the edge of my love, or, at least, to lessen the pain of its disappointments."

"But I have heard you speak highly of these rebels," said O'Carroll; "and it is not long since Catherine was praising your freedom from prejudice, and exalting you above many others, for the generous liberality of your sentiments."

"A lover is a very camelion, as you well know," returned Talbot. "His feelings take their hue from those of his mistress, and I was in duty bound to speak with moderation of a people, whose praises were always on her lips, though I will not do myself the injustice to say, my only motive was to gain her favor. I detest that spirit of recrimination, which is so common; and I have been scarcely less disgusted, than Miss Courtland herself, at the violence of Colonel Dunbar and other officers, who were in the habit of visiting here, and who made the causes of the war their whole theme of conversation, embellished, I assure you, with all the bitterness and rancour which party spirit could suggest."

"Let us say what we will of the Americans," returned O'Carroll, "it is in vain to deny them courage and constancy; and though I would not have the words pass

through the keyhole of that door, I just whisper in your ear, that I begin to think their cause not quite so bad as we have heretofore considered it."

"Oh, it is shameful, unjustifiable, unnatural," exclaimed Talbot. "And none but a native of your rebellious country, O'Carroll, would pretend to excuse it."

"Many a staunch heart, and many a bold English tongue has eloquently pleaded in its behalf," returned O'Carroll. "But this is foreign to our subject, and we will leave the argument till another time. I wish now to inquire what course you intend to pursue with respect to Miss Courtland?"

"To what do you advise me?" asked Talbot.

"Oh, I could not manage my own love affairs with any discretion," said O'Carroll, with forced indifference; "and of course I cannot pretend to offer any advice on yours. But I tell you candidly, because I think it my duty, that I believe Grahame loves Miss Courtland passionately, and—and I—"

"Well," interrupted Talbot quickly, "why do you hesitate, and how am I to understand that threatening and?"

O'Carroll smiled, and answered in the words of his favorite bard,

"And to be plain,  
I think there is not half a kiss to choose,  
Who loves another best."

"I will learn if you are right, though at the expense of all my hopes," exclaimed Talbot, rising, and traversing the apartment in extreme agitation.

"And what method will you take," inquired O'Carroll, "to ascertain the extent and proportion of affection which the Colonel and Miss Courtland cherish for each other?"

"I care nothing for him or for his passion," replied Talbot; "I wish only to learn if my hopes are to be blighted in the bud, or if they may expand in the sunshine of my lovely Catherine's smiles. I can bear this suspense no longer; and to-morrow I will request the

Major's permission to learn my fate from the lips of his daughter."

"Do not be hasty, Talbot," said O'Carroll; "if she loves Grahame you will be rejected; so reflect well before you subject yourself to this mortification."

"If I am to be rejected, the sooner the better," answered Talbot; "but a secret hope whispers me that I may prove successful."

"You rely upon Major Courtland's favor, and are encouraged by the partiality which he evinces for you," said O'Carroll. "But, my dear fellow, it is a false support. Catherine will accept no one repugnant to her own wishes even to oblige her father; nor do I believe that he would lay any restraint upon her inclinations, however they might be at variance with his own."

"Nor would I, Captain O'Carroll, consent to wed her upon such terms," replied Talbot haughtily. "I would force no woman to the altar, nor accept a heart which was not voluntarily bestowed. If she is, indeed, so infatuated as to love this rebel officer, the pain of resigning her will lose its poignancy; and in time I may learn to think of her with less regret than I have often felt when I saw her rise to quit me during my illness."

"You are the very man to be rejected," exclaimed O'Carroll. "Few can so readily find a balm not only for mortified affection but for mortified pride; that deepest, deadliest of wounds, which festers and gangrenes with time, and so often arms the hand of its victim with the weapon of self-destruction."

"I shall not resort to such a desperate measure," said Talbot, "though you may well suppose my pride, brave it out as I may, will be sorely touched;—to be rivalled by this man; a leader of rebellion, a mover of sedition; one, who, however brave, is resisting a cause which every true English heart should honor and espouse, and who, for that single reason, if there were no other, should be to the high-minded daughter of a stern and devoted loyalist, an object of suspicion and indifference, if not of utter aversion."



"Your passion makes you unjust," said O'Carroll. "Colonel Grabame is a man whom friend and foe must both admire, and when this little rivalry is past, you will acknowledge, Talbot, that so rare a union of graces, virtues, and talents, are seldom or never to be met with. No woman need blush to find herself won by him, and no man can despise a rival so resistless."

"I have no particular fancy to be rivalled by any one, far less by a rebel," returned Talbot. "He has subdued me in arms, and I would not yield to him in love. But to-morrow will decide. 'Hope is a lover's staff,' and this night at least it will support me."

Major Courtland at this instant crossed the hall on his way to his own apartment; and hearing voices in Talbot's room, he rightly conjectured that O'Carroll was still there. Stopping a moment at the door, he said through the keyhole,

"It is past midnight, Captain, and Talbot will have all Macbeth's witches dancing round him, if you do not cut short your tale of wonder."

"It was ended long ago, Major, and we have discussed half the affairs of the nation since then," said O'Carroll, throwing open the door as he spoke. The Major, however, declined entering; and advising the young men to retire to bed, passed on to his apartment. O'Carroll shortly after bade his friend good night, and left him to follow the Major's advice.

## CHAPTER V.

O, 'tis the curse in love, and still approved,  
When women cannot love where they're beloved.  
*Shakspeare.*

THE resolution which Captain Talbot had so firmly expressed on the preceding evening of declaring his

passion to Miss Courtland, was somewhat unsettled by the representations of O'Carroll, and finally overthrown by a night of cool reflection. He had long witnessed with pain the devoted attentions of Colonel Grahame, though he had sought to persuade himself that the smiling complacency with which they were received by Catherine was only the natural expression of courteous and kindly feelings. O'Carroll had now dispelled his wilful blindness, and compelled him, however reluctantly, to admit the conviction, that her manner was marked by more tenderness and bashful reserve, than consorted with the rationality of mere friendship. Should he then offer himself and be rejected, as from these circumstances it seemed most probable he would be, his situation would be exceedingly embarrassing, not only to himself but also to Miss Courtland.

Colonel Grahame had once mentioned to him the willingness of the American General, provided also that General How consented, to exchange him for Captain P——, then a prisoner in Philadelphia. But Talbot had no wish to remove from the society of Miss Courtland, and was willing to remain a prisoner till the opening of the spring campaign again called him to the field. He of course heard Grahame's proposition with so much indifference that it was at once evident he had no wish to accede to it; and the Colonel, accordingly, had never mentioned it since. Under existing circumstances, Talbot again recalled this overture, and wishing to secure the means of retreat in case his fair one should repulse him, he one day spoke of it to the Colonel. Grahame, however, informed him that Captain P—— had been exchanged a few days before; but that if he wished to return to Philadelphia, the General would doubtless permit him to go on his parole till an exchange could be effected. Talbot thanked him, and resolved, in accepting or refusing the offer, to be guided by the issue of his suit.

But circumstances shortly revived his hopes, and led him to fancy that he had misconstrued Grahame's attention to Miss Courtland. The Colonel's visits were less

frequent, and much shorter than formerly ; his manners seemed constrained, his air abstracted, and often sad. Catherine, too, saw and felt this change ; and it completely drew aside the veil which screened her heart, and which her father's anxious hand had only partially withdrawn. But she had too much maidenly pride, too much delicacy and dignity of mind, not to conceal from every eye, but chiefly from that of Grahame, the pain which the change in his manners caused her. She was in truth deeply mortified to feel herself so much wounded by it ; and resolving not to yield to emotions of which she was ashamed, she struggled for cheerfulness, and so successfully preserved it, that no one would have suspected her of cherishing deep and silent regrets. Towards Grahame she exhibited less of that winning and delightful frankness which had heretofore marked her manners ; but her reserve was tinged with a softness which touched him deeply, and which was prompted by a secret conviction that his estrangement was the result of some melancholy necessity, which it was kinder to sooth with pity than to aggravate with unjust censure.

Captain Talbot, with the eyes of a jealous rival, observed all that passed before him, and willing to judge as unfavorably as possible of Grahame, unhesitatingly pronounced him trifling, inconstant, and capricious. Assured, too, by the unchanged vivacity of Catherine's manner, that she was indifferent to the Colonel's conduct or motives, Talbot felt encouraged to open his suit ; and one morning, finding the Major alone in his library, he avowed to him his love and his hopes ; and with the fervid eloquence of true affection, entreated him to sanction them.

The Major did not attempt to conceal the pleasure which Captain Talbot's proposals gave him ; and he promised to do and say every thing which might ensure his success with Catherine. Still he had many doubts, fearing as he did, that her heart was fixed upon another ; but he said nothing to damp the ardor of the young man's hopes, nor was he himself aware how much he

relied on the devotedness of her filial affection, for the accomplishment of his wishes.

Talbot waited only for the Major's approbation of his suit, when, agitated by contending hopes and fears, he sought Miss Courtland, to learn from her lips the sentence of his fate.

She heard him without surprise ; for she had long been prepared for the unwelcome declaration ; and the fabric of Talbot's fondly raised hopes was at once destroyed by her firm and decided rejection. Yet the gentleness of her manner, and the sweetness with which she assured him of sincere regard, robbed the sentence of half its bitterness ; and though hurt, mortified, and disappointed, he left her without one feeling of resentment, and animated, if possible, by still higher sentiments of admiration and esteem.

As he retired, Major Courtland met him in the hall, and immediately read in his agitated countenance the unfortunate issue of his suit. The Major had no reason to hope otherwise ; but still he had cherished sanguine wishes ; and now the sudden disappointment was keener than he was prepared to meet composedly. Yielding to the feelings which it inspired, he seized Talbot's hand, exclaiming with vehemence,

"Do I read your looks aright, Talbot ? has she disappointed us."

"I have no right to be disappointed," returned the Captain, with an assumed composure ; "but I confess myself deeply, fatally so."

"Ungrateful girl, thus to blast my fondest expectations," exclaimed the Major ; "but I will reason with her, and yet convince her of her folly."

He was moving towards the parlor door, when Talbot stopped him.

"Do not speak harshly to her," he said ; "do not even censure her ; she has acted from principle, and I only am blamable in having presumed on the friendship which she expressed for me."

"Pshaw !" exclaimed the Major pettishly ; "I am too old to understand this disinterested love ; tell me, if

you will yet have the girl, and it shall be my task to remove all difficulties out of the way."

"You cannot remove them, Major," returned Talbot; "for you cannot inspire her with affection for me; and passionately as I love her, I would not accept her without."

"I know no reason why she may not be made to love you," said the Major; "if there is any, I desire to be informed of it, and will quickly decide if it is so utterly insuperable. I would not force her inclinations; neither would I on an affair of so much consequence to her future welfare, yield to a foolish and imaginary whim; and heaven knows her silly sex are full of vain fancies which ought to be purged away by the wisdom of ours. Though Kate is as free from them as most women, she is sometimes misguided as well as others. But we will soon see if that is the case now."

He left the Captain as he concluded, and proceeded towards the parlor; while Talbot, hoping nothing, wishing nothing, even from his interference,—for he was too true and noble a lover to accept the person without the affections of his mistress,—pursued his way to his own apartment, anxious only lest the Major in his zeal might wound the feelings of Catherine, and induce her to think it was through his intercession that she was thus assailed.

Catherine was standing on the same spot and in the very attitude as when Talbot left her; but her father's entrance disturbed her reverie; and returning to her seat, she silently resumed her work. The Major took several turns through the apartment, then threw himself into a seat beside her; and undetermined in what manner to open his conversation, began carelessly to turn over the contents of her work basket.

Absorbed by her own reflections Catherine scarcely observed him, till he took up a slip of paper, and after closely examining the writing which it contained, abruptly asked,

"Whose scribbling is this Kate? and what is the meaning of it?"

Catherine looked up, and colored slightly, as she replied,

"It is the translation of an Indian song, father."

"And have you learned enough of the barbarous dialect of the savages," asked the Major, "to render it into such good English, and such fine poetry too?"

"I know nothing of it, father," said Catherine; "at least nothing except a few common words, which I have heard the Indians use occasionally."

"Indeed!" said her father, "and whose translation may this be?"

A blush of the most vivid crimson overspread her face, as she replied,

"Colonel Grahame translated the song for me, father, because he thought it very pretty in the original, and heard me express my wish to know the words, when the Indians sung it."

"Colonel Grahame is very obliging! exceedingly kind indeed!" exclaimed the Major, in a sarcastic tone; and throwing the paper from him, with a smile of disdain, he rose and walked rapidly to the window; but almost instantly returning, he stopped before Catherine, and fixing his eyes steadfastly upon her, said with a significant accent,

"Catherine, I met Captain Talbot just now in the hall!"

She understood her father's meaning, but uncertain in what manner to reply, she remained for a moment silent, and he continued,

"And I was hurt to find that the dearest hopes of a heart so worthy of all love and confidence, should be thus early blighted by the hand, which I most anxiously wished should cherish and mature them."

"Father, it could not be, consistently with my own wishes and inclinations," replied Catherine; "and emboldened by the indulgence which you have always shown me, I ventured in this instance to consult them. I knew that even Captain Talbot's happiness was far less dear to you than that of your only child."

"It is, indeed, so dear to me," returned the Major, "that I would gladly see it secured by a union so desirable."

"In a worldly point of view it doubtless is desirable," returned Catherine; "but my dear father knows from experience that the most pure and permanent felicity results from a union of mind, heart, and sentiment."

"I do not conceive it indispensable to happiness," said the Major, "to be always of one mind, or to love with the foolish passion of romance."

"Neither do I," said Catherine; "but there should at least be a feeling of preference to sanction a connexion so solemn. I despise those cold and selfish hearts which can deliberately enter into the most sacred and endearing of all relations from motives of low and sordid policy alone."

"And so do I," returned the Major, "when such are the only motives; but in this world of calculation interest must not be wholly disregarded; where, too, there is every qualification, both personal and mental, to command admiration and esteem, the disordered suggestions of a capricious fancy, ought never to sway the calm and candid decision of a rational mind."

"You are certainly right, my dear father," said Catherine; "there is no case of the kind in which mere fancy ought to govern our decision; but there are some in which, unaccountable as it may seem, the perverse heart feels it impossible to return the love of an amiable object, even though gifted with every quality which is lovely and desirable."

"I know of but one," said the Major, "and that, if I understood you right in our last conference, is not yours. A prepossessed heart may be indifferent to all save the object of its affections; but I can imagine no reason but mere womanly caprice, why one which is free and disengaged, should unhesitatingly reject a man of birth and education,—a man, in short, like Captain Talbot."

Catherine made no reply; but sensible that her father was keenly observing her, she bent her head over her

work, though she could not hide the blushes which dyed both neck and brow with crimson. The Major was by no means pleased with this embarrassed silence ; and resolving to hear from her own lips the cause of Talbot's rejection, he again addressed her :

" You assign no reason, Catherine, for your aversion to Captain Talbot ; and as I have never before known you to act without a sufficient motive, I am constrained to believe there is one which, for the first time in your life, you think proper to conceal from me."

Catherine raised her eyes to her father's face ; but they instantly sank beneath his piercing glance ; and though oppressed by the most painful and embarrassing emotions, she conquered them by a powerful effort, and replied in a playful tone,

" I have told you, dear father; there were some perverse feelings for which we cannot account even to ourselves ; and it may be the influence of these, or perhaps my want of taste and discernment, which renders me insensible to the attractions of Captain Talbot."

" Do you speak with your accustomed candor, Catherine ?" asked her father, with a look which again covered her ingenuous face with blushes ; though with admirable self-possession she maintained her playfulness of manner, as she replied,

" Dear father, does my rejection of Captain Talbot seem to you so very strange, that you must persist in doubting the only reason in my power to give ?"

" You have given me none," returned her father ; " for I will not dignify with the name of reason the caprice by which you do not deny yourself to have been actuated. And, I confess, it does seem passing strange to me, that a man of Captain Talbot's pretensions and attractions should fail of success in his addresses to a lady whose affections were not preoccupied. Will you have the goodness to inform me what you find in him so very objectionable ?"

" There is nothing in Captain Talbot to which the most fastidious would object," said Catherine ; " the woman who is won by him will fill a happy and envia-



ble station ; and had I a sister, or a friend who was dear to me, I could not wish her a happier destiny than that of loving and being beloved by such a heart as Talbot's."

"And yet," said her father, "you voluntarily, and without cause decline this happiness. Catherine, I cannot understand this inconsistency of word and action."

"It is no inconsistency, father," returned Catherine, "I said it would be a happiness for the woman who loved him."

"But not for you?" said her father; "am I to understand you so, Kate?"

Catherine looked up with a timid smile and answered in these beautiful words of Shakspeare.

"I cannot love him.

Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,  
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth,  
In voices well divulged, free, learned, and valiant,  
And in dimension, and the shape of nature,  
A gracious person; but yet I cannot love him,  
He might have took his answer long ago."

"He might, perhaps, have took his answer long ago," said Major Courtland, who, with an air of ill concealed impatience, had listened to the quotation; "but I greatly doubt if its import would have been what it now is. Circumstances alter cases, Catherine."

"They do, sir," she replied; "but I assure you, with sincerity, that I have never known the time when I would have accepted Captain Talbot's addresses; nor would I do him the injustice to accept them, with my present feelings. He is worthy of the warmest and most exclusive attachment, which, whenever I form such a connexion, I wish to bestow on the object of my choice."

"I do not wish to force your inclinations, Catherine," said her father; "but I confess it would greatly increase my happiness to see you united to so deserving a man, as Captain Talbot. I will say nothing of the advantages attending such a union, though they are by no means trifling, nor ought they to be disregarded; nor would they be disregarded, did you not labor under

some strange delusion. A few weeks ago, I should have been at no loss, in detecting the real cause of your indifference; but that, I think, cannot exist now; for the affection of a truly delicate woman will not, ought not to survive the caprice, coldness, neglect even, of a declared lover; and from one, who has only intimated his attachment by insinuating attentions, and ambiguous hints, such conduct is contemptuous and insulting; and must at once destroy the very root of affection."

"My sentiments towards Captain Talbot, sir," replied Catherine, with an air of mild, but firm dignity, "are not the effect of delusion, nor are they in the least degree influenced by those which I may entertain for any other person. I regard him as a friend, I admire him as a man, but I cannot feel for him that interest and affection which alone could warrant my receiving his addresses."

"I hate this prating about mutual affection and disinterested love," said the Major, in a tone of chagrin; "it is only worthy of the babbling tongue of a novel reading school girl; and I thought you, Kate, superior to such nonsense."

"If it is nonsense, father," she replied, "to decline the addresses of a man to whom one is perfectly indifferent, and to wish that a connexion for life should be cemented by pure and well founded affection, then I acknowledge myself not at all superior to the charge, nor in the least degree anxious to become so."

"But there is still another charge," said the Major, "which were I to make explicitly and directly, your ingenuity would not assist you to evade, nor your conscience permit you to deny. But I know your candor, Catherine, and I will not extort from you the confession, which I fear your love of truth would compel you to make, were I inclined to urge my investigation. My suspicions, however, may be unfounded, and I will only ask you to convince me that they are so, by taking into consideration the subject of Talbot's attachment, and returning me, if possible, a favorable answer at the termination of a week or ten days from this period."

"My dear father," returned Catherine, "I would do any thing that you desire, consistent with right principles; but to take into consideration a subject, on which I have finally and unalterably decided, would be to rekindle hopes which I have once extinguished, and must again with seeming wantonness destroy."

"Perhaps, my dear," said her father, "longer reflection may induce you to cherish and encourage them, and convince you, that you have too hastily resolved to blight the germs of Talbot's opening affection."

Catherine shook her head. "Do not urge me on this subject, dear father, nor make me, from a wish to oblige you, unjust to Captain Talbot. I am convinced that time and reflection will but confirm my decision; it were therefore useless as well as ungenerous, to keep alive those expectations which I can never conscientiously fulfil."

"Then you have resolved to disappoint the hopes I have so fondly cherished," exclaimed her father, in a tone of displeasure; "and from a foolish whim, or what is still worse, from a more foolish partiality for a capricious rebel, you persist in declining an alliance, which combines every advantage that the most fastidious fancy could desire."

"Father, you were not wont to judge me so harshly," said Catherine, with a blush of offended pride and delicacy; "if ever I differed from you in sentiment or opinion, your love found for me a ready excuse, and led you to believe I was uninfluenced by trifling or improper motives. But now you are hasty in condemning me; and though I have offered a reason for my rejection of Captain Talbot, you persist in imputing it to a cause, which you have no grounds for suspecting."

"Assure me, Catherine," said the Major, "that your preference of Colonel Grahame has not induced your rejection of Captain Talbot, and I will say no more upon the subject."

"I do assure you, sir," she answered, "as I have before, that no prepossession whatever has in the least degree affected or influenced my conduct towards Cap-

tain Talbot. I thought, father, you knew me too well to suppose I would, unsought, yield up my affections to any one. I have been taught to control them, and pride, were there no stronger motive, would forbid my bestowing them unasked."

"I confess, my dear girl," said the Major, "I have no reason to doubt your prudence or your delicacy; but affection renders me anxious, and perhaps suspicious. This Grahame, too, is the very man to be dreaded; he has all the fascinations which most easily captivate the unguarded heart of woman; and he is the last person, on almost every account, to whom I would see my daughter united. I never see him of late, without cursing the northern campaign and all its train of disasters."

"I regret," returned Catherine, "that even the solicitude of parental love should render you unjust to a man, who once stood so high in your estimation, and who certainly demands not only our gratitude for his services, but our esteem and admiration for the many virtues which brighten and exalt his character."

"I would not be unjust to him," returned the Major; "I know there is much to praise and admire in his character; but there are some things in his conduct which awaken suspicion and distrust. I could, however, forgive these, because ignorant of their motives; but I cannot overlook the seeming caprice, which has induced him of late, to absent himself from the society of friends whom he professed to esteem; and more than all, I cannot pardon the ungenerous assurance, with which, when he fancied he had gained your affections, he shook off the courteous gallantry of a timid wooer, and assumed the air of one who thought the prize he had won not worth possession."

"My dear father," exclaimed Catherine, deeply hurt and offended by his cruel injustice; "you color the picture with your own prejudices; I can discern nothing like arrogance or presumption in Colonel Grahame's manner; and though it may have become more pensive and reserved, the change is to be ascribed to neces-

sity, to principle, to prudence, to any thing, sooner than to the motives which you have imputed to him, and by which, even were there any ground for such motives, I believe him incapable of being actuated."

The Major was about to reply with unusual severity, as the bitter smile which curled his lip indicated, when the subject of their conversation suddenly entered the parlor. Catherine, conscious that her father was observing her, strove in vain to appear gay and unembarrassed, while the Major, too much excited, immediately to recover his wonted cheerfulness, received the Colonel with an air of formality and restraint, which however did not surprise him, as he had of late been often treated by him with coldness and reserve.

The Major, unable to control his feelings which had been irritated by the conversation with his daughter, and unwilling to display them before Grahame, after a few cursory observations, pleaded as an excuse, the necessity of finishing some letters, and quitted the room.

A short and embarrassing silence prevailed, for a few minutes after he left them; but Grahame seemed anxious to interrupt it, and said,

"The departure of Captain Talbot will make quite a breach in your domestic circle, Miss Courtland."

The abruptness of the remark startled her; but without comprehending what Grahame meant by Captain Talbot's departure, she thought only of the declaration which he had that morning made, and fearing the Colonel alluded to something connected with it, she blushed deeply and said in confusion,

"I know nothing, I have heard nothing of it."

Surprised by her blushes and her disorder, and aware of Talbot's attachment to her, Grahame was almost ready to believe that it was mutual; and agonizing as the suspicion was, he regretted, should such be the case, having occasioned her a moment's pain, and immediately said,

"His departure, however, will not deprive you of his society, since he is on parole and will doubtless visit you frequently."

The truth now flashed upon Catherine, and with a look and tone which banished every suspicion of her love for Talbot from Grahame's breast, she asked,

"Is Captain Talbot then really resolved to leave us so suddenly, and before we had received the least intimation of his design?"

"I met him at the bottom of the avenue," said the Colonel, "and he requested me to obtain permission for him to return to Philadelphia on his parole, till a final exchange could be effected."

"In our present limited society," returned Catherine, "the absence of every individual is felt, and Captain Talbot has been so long with us, that we shall miss him greatly. He will be an irreparable loss to my father, who is extremely attached to him, and so he would be to his intimate friend, O'Carroll, had he not such a perpetual fund of amusement and happiness in his own gay and versatile mind, that no deprivation can long sadden his enjoyments."

"He possesses an enviable temperament indeed," said Grahame, "and, I should think, would be missed from the domestic circle even more than Captain Talbot."

"Much more," said Catherine; "and I assure you, Colonel Grahame, I look forward to the approach of spring, with sensations far different from those, with which I have ever before welcomed that delightful season. It will deprive us of Captain O'Carroll, and break up the little circle, in which I have this winter enjoyed so much happiness."

"It has been, indeed, a magic circle," returned Grahame, "within whose charming bounds, I would gladly, had my country been at peace, have centered all my thoughts, my wishes, my fondest and most cherished hopes of happiness."

Catherine neither raised her eyes, nor attempted to reply; there was something in the impassioned tone of Grahame's voice, which agitated and subdued her; and before she could recover from its influence he again spoke,

"But no earthly pleasure is unalloyed," Miss Courtland; "and he who is conscious of the purity and rectitude of his motives, cannot behold himself an object of suspicion to those, whom he regards only with reverence and esteem, without emotions of the most exquisite pain."

"Colonel Grahame," exclaimed Catherine, anxious to excuse her father's conduct, "my father cannot be ungrateful nor unjust! Will you allow nothing for the wounded pride of a (till now) victorious soldier, who feels the chains of his captivity, gently as your generosity has fastened them around him, insupportably galling? Since the disgraces, fatigues, and disappointments of the northern campaign, my father's health and spirits have been broken and unequal; he is at times utterly changed; and I find it difficult to recognise in his altered character and feelings the candid and indulgent parent, who has been to me father, mother, friend, and more than supplied the place of all."

"He could not have a more eloquent tongue to plead in his defence," said Grahame. "But I have not presumed to censure your father, Miss Courtland; though wounded by his coldness, it is not, perhaps, wholly unmerited. I had flattered myself, however, that Major Courtland's knowledge of my character, and the friendship with which he honored me, would have led him to judge less harshly of my conduct and, though in many instances it may appear mysterious, to do me the justice of believing that my motives are upright and honorable. To you, Miss Courtland, who, with so much gentleness have pardoned all my seeming caprice, and whose society and friendship have caused this dreary winter of hardship and suffering to glide away on wings of enchantment, I owe a thousand thanks; and to you, I declare, there are circumstances which have governed, and still continue to govern my conduct; cruel circumstances, since they involve it in mystery which renders me an object of suspicion to my friends, and forbids the expression of feelings on which my happiness depends."

"Colonel Grahame," said Catherine, "you ought not to suppose from the little caprices which have of late marked the manners of my father, that his opinion of you is changed; his mind has been engrossed and agitated by a subject of peculiar interest, and when the excitement occasioned by it is past, I doubt not you will find him the same social and unreserved friend as you found him on your first acquaintance."

"You know not how little you promise in saying so," returned Grahame, smiling; and willing to change the subject. "You know not how many prejudices I had to subdue, how much pride to soften, before your father would admit me to his friendship, before he could reconcile the idea of courage, honor, or generosity, with the character of a *rebel* and an American."

"I know his pride well," returned Catherine, smiling; "and how deeply it was wounded by the defeat at Saratoga. I know, too, with what disapprobation he views the struggles of this country to shake off the yoke of British power; but I believe that he respects the national character of the Americans, and admires the boldness and independence of their spirit."

"And how came it," asked Grahame, "that, with a father so loyal and aristocratic, you should have honored us by espousing our cause?"

"Many circumstances induced me to do so," returned Catherine; "and though, till my father took up arms, the subject was seldom mentioned, I thought much of it in secret; and when called upon for an opinion, felt too much confidence in the justice of my sentiments to wish to conceal them, even had I not despised the meanness of disavowing my opinions from a fear of their proving unpopular."

"You are superior to all disguise and artifice," exclaimed Grahame with fervor; "and the noble independence with which you express sentiments so worthy of a free and virtuous mind, adds dignity to the cause you so eloquently advocate. Had you espoused the opposite cause, Miss Courtland, I should have feared your persuasive influence. I know many ladies who are



nobly patriotic, sacrificing every wish to the good of their country, and actively seeking, by a system of benevolent self-denial, to supply the necessities of the suffering soldiers, who are laying down their lives in order to secure to them and to their children the privilege of sitting unmolested under their own vine and fig tree. But I know none, Miss Courtland, who, circumstanced as you are, would have discerned justice from oppression; or, even if they had, would have preserved their opinions pure and immutable;—not one who would have openly resisted the persuasions of parental love, the arguments of friendship, the lessons of education; and with virtuous courage have dared, like you, to contend for the right against a torrent of opposition, which would have borne down one less nobly firm and independent.”

“Do not make me vain of my patriotism, Colonel Grahame, by this excess of praise,” said Catherine, blushing as she spoke. “My father early taught me to renounce my opinions only when convinced of their fallacy; and the feelings which inspired them must grow cold, and the links which bind me to this land be broken, before that moment of conviction shall arrive.”

“Heaven forbid that it should ever arrive!” ejaculated Grahame, passionately. “May every succeeding year draw closer the links which bind you to a land honored by your love, and proud to number you among her daughters!”

He rose as he finished speaking, and walked hastily towards the window, evidently struggling to subdue the most powerful emotions. In truth the secret of his heart was trembling on his lips, and it was only by the most violent effort of self-command, that he could restrain himself from pouring the story of his love into the ear of the blushing Catherine. But one moment of reflection completed his triumph. He would have scorned himself had he been capable, under circumstances which involved him in mystery and suspicion, of suing for the love of an innocent and beautiful woman; but he felt more deeply than ever the cruel perplexity of a situa-

tion which compelled him to appear guilty when he was but too generous and too honorable for his own peace; and indifferent when his whole heart was most tenderly and devotedly attached to one, who, he had every reason to believe, sincerely reciprocated his passion. Calm, but sad, he turned from the window; and taking up his hat, with a sigh which Catherine responded, he approached her to take his leave.

"You will not go," she said, aroused from her painful reverie by observing his design, "without first seeing my father."

"Your father avoids me," he replied, "and why should I force myself upon him?"

"No, he does not designedly avoid you," said Catherine; "remain and dine with us, and prove yourself, as I am sure you are, superior to caprice, and you will find my father unchanged, and worthy of your friendship."

"I would do this and more at your request," said Grahame; "but I have a positive engagement, and must be gone."

"Go, then, if it must be so," said Catherine; "but do not desert us for a trifling cause."

"I will not, I cannot," said Grahame; "I will even consent, for your sake, to endure the glance of suspicion and distrust. Farewell, continue to me your regard, and whatever opinions may be expressed to my prejudice, condemn me not unheard."

He pressed her hand for a moment between his own, and then precipitately quitted the apartment. Catherine remained immovable till the last sound of his horse's feet had died away in the distance; then turned with a sigh, to her seat.

As she did so, a folded billet lying on the carpet caught her attention, and on taking it up, she perceived that it was directed in a delicate female hand to Colonel Grahame. Her heart beat quick as she examined it; the seal had been broken, but the impression of a rose and the motto, "*L' amour et constance*," was still perfectly visible. Much as she would have given to know

the contents of this suspicious billet, her inviolable honor and delicacy forbade her even harboring the thought of opening it. She was still gazing upon it with an interest and emotions which precluded every other idea, when the door opened, and before she was aware of his entrance, O'Carroll was looking over her shoulder.

## CHAPTER VI.

This noble passion,  
Child of integrity, bath from my soul  
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
To thy good truth and honor.

*Shakspeare.*

SINCE the night of O'Carroll's encounter with the stranger in the forest path, he had been unable to think or converse with interest upon any other topic. The vague hints given by the man relative to Marion Spencer, the first and only object of his love, had startled and astonished him. Hopes which he had long sought to crush, and feelings of affection which he had vainly struggled to subdue, were rekindled, and glowed more vividly than ever. Regularly as the evening returned, he resorted to the scene of his interview with the stranger, in the hope of again meeting him. But he was as regularly disappointed, and only the excess of his affection for Marion, and his anxious desire to learn something more definite concerning her, would have induced him to persevere in his nocturnal walks. Great part of the day, too, was not unfrequently spent in this manner, but with equally bad success.

He had just returned from one of these vexatious perambulations, when he surprised Catherine, as mentioned at the close of the preceding chapter, examining the note which Colonel Grahame had accidentally dropped.

O'Carroll had felt more than commonly disappointed that morning in not meeting the stranger; and as he slowly retraced his homeward steps, he deeply and bitterly experienced that sickness of the heart, which long deferred hope so frequently occasions. But his constitutional gaiety never long deserted him, and completely as he had been depressed the moment before, it instantly prevailed, when, on entering the parlor, he observed the entire abstraction of Catherine, and the absorbing interest with which she was examining the folded billet. He had seen Grahame ride from the house; and conjecturing that both the billet and her absence of mind were connected with his visit, O'Carroll gently approached her, exclaiming in a tone of humorous satire, as he glanced archly over her shoulder,

"Never durst poet touch a pen to write,  
Until his ink were tempered with love's sighs."

Catherine blushed, and by an involuntary gesture, crushed the billet in her hand, but O'Carroll's eye had already glanced at the superscription; and impelled by an irresistible feeling, he took it hastily from her. Catherine, astonished by the rudeness of the act, turned to reprove him, but was prevented by the excessive emotion visible in his flushed and agitated countenance; and before she could speak to inquire its cause, he tore open the note with the gesture of a maniac.

Shocked and surprised at the intention indicated by this procedure, she eagerly caught his arm, exclaiming, "Captain O'Carroll, what are you about to do?"

He looked wildly at her, and resisting her efforts to possess herself again of the billet, demanded in an agitated voice,

"How, in the name of Heaven, came you by this?"

"It was dropped by Colonel Grahame, and I found it on the carpet," said Catherine. "Why are you thus disturbed? and why do you retain this note? I entreat you will return it to me directly."

"Not till I have first learned from its contents if I am the dupe of a designing villain," returned O'Carroll.

"What is it you mean?" asked Catherine, surprised less by the ambiguity of his words than by the fierceness and extreme agitation of his manner. He held the note towards her, and pointing to the superscription,

"That," he said, "is Marion Spencer's writing; and that," turning up the seal, "was my gift to her in the early days of our acquaintance."

"It is impossible the writing should be her's, Captain O'Carroll, though the resemblance may be striking," said Catherine; "and it is no singular circumstance to find two seals alike."

"But I will know if it is the same or another," replied O'Carroll, and he was again about to peruse the note, when Catherine, who could not endure this open violation of what was just and honorable, interposed more warmly than before:

"I cannot permit it, Captain O'Carroll," she said; "the note at present belongs to me, and I am responsible for its safe keeping. I know nothing of its contents; they may be trifling, or they may be of the first importance; but of that we have no right to inform ourselves."

"And do you then require," asked O'Carroll, impatiently, "that I should remain in this agony of doubt and suspense, when a single glance may terminate them? I cannot comply with your unreasonable demand; and though conscious that I am about to commit an unjustifiable act, I will atone for it by acknowledging to Graham my transgression."

Catherine saw that all farther remonstrance was vain, and she remained silent, though without striving to conceal her displeasure, while O'Carroll opened the note, and read the following words, apparently written in the agitation of haste and affliction.

"Why do you stay from us so long? Three days are past, and we have not seen you. Your society has become indispensable to us; it has long been our only solace; and soon, I shudder to think how soon you will be my only friend in this land of enemies and strangers. My father is very ill to-day, and begs you will come to him this evening; he has much to say, much which he

would confide to your friendship. He calls me. Farewell, and may God bless you. M."

This short billet bore no date of time or place, and the letter M was its only signature. But it was thus that Marion was wont to sign her letters; the handwriting, too, was her's; the unreserved and artless expressions were all her own; and O'Carroll no longer entertained a doubt of her being the author of this billet. He then recalled every circumstance of mystery which attended Grahame; the unguarded expressions of Minoya; and the unintelligible hints given him by the stranger; and uniting all, deduced the belief that Grahame was the friend, so emphatically mentioned by the man, who wished to injure him by robbing him of Marion Spencer's affections; though in what manner he had become known to her, O'Carroll vainly puzzled himself to imagine.

Transported with rage and jealousy, he tossed the billet from him, and stamped upon it with the fury of a madman; while Catherine, in utter astonishment gazed silently at him, almost ready to believe he was suddenly bereft of reason. Seemingly unconscious of her presence, he traversed the room in uncontrolled agitation, sometimes uttering vehement ejaculations, and then speaking in a low and unintelligible tone, till Catherine, alarmed by his conduct, ventured to inquire the cause of his extreme emotion.

He recovered himself, at the sound of her voice, and replied with tolerable firmness,

"I have found out this Grahame, Miss Courtland; this lofty, pure, and honorable man as we have thought him, is a canting villain, 'a goodly apple with a rotten heart;' and to answer his own ends, he could play the devil with the dearest friend he has."

"Do the contents of that note," asked Catherine gravely, "authorize you to make this bold assertion?"

"If, as I believe," returned O'Carroll, "the note is from Marion Spencer, they do. It conjures him to come to her, I know not where, with an earnest tender-

ness which only love could dictate, and which would never have been his, unless he had assiduously sought to win it."

"Is her signature at the bottom of the note?" asked Catherine.

"The initial of her name is there," said O'Carroll; "but I am convinced by the writing, the expressions, the seal, that gift of love, that my suspicions are just."

"And supposing they are," said Catherine, with great firmness of voice and manner; "Colonel Grahame is undoubtedly ignorant of your affection for Miss Spencer, and of course, could not be aware that in seeking to win her, he was becoming a rival to you."

"He knew it well," returned O'Carroll quickly; "a thousand and a thousand times, I have repeated to him the name of Marion Spencer; I have told him the story of my love, and I little thought, when with affected sympathy, he thought to soothe my regrets, that he was secretly triumphing over me, and anticipating the moment, when the object to me so dear and so lamented, should become his own."

"This female cannot be Miss Spencer," said Catherine. "I am confident that Colonel Grahame is incapable of acting unworthily, and I entreat you, Captain O'Carroll, to suspend your censure, till from his own lips you hear an acknowledgement of his guilt."

Had the Captain been in a condition to view things calmly and rationally, he would have admired the heroic generosity of Catherine. Though deeply wounded by the idea of Grahame's attachment to another, she was uninfluenced by resentment and refused to condemn him, still inflexibly believing that his honor and his integrity were stainless. But O'Carroll was maddened with jealousy; and assured that Grahame had injured him, he was zealous to censure and condemn his conduct.

"I am positive, Miss Courtland," he said, "that the author of this billet is, and can be no other than Miss Spencer. Grahame has basely supplanted me in her affections; and, fearful of my vengeance, has sought to

hide from me the place of her abode. But he shall find that I brook insult from no man, nor shall my situation as a prisoner of war, protect him from the chastisement he merits."

"What is it you mean?" exclaimed Catherine, alarmed by this insinuation; "surely you will not proceed to the rash extremity of a challenge, Captain O'Carroll."

"Colonel Grahame must satisfactorily explain his conduct," returned O'Carroll, "which, however, I believe impossible; or fire at a mark with me at any place he may choose to select for the purpose."

Catherine's alarm was dispelled by a momentary reflection on Grahame's character, and she smiled contemptuously, as she replied,

"I am exceedingly mistaken in Colonel Grahame, if he is not too brave a man to throw away his own life, or destroy that of another in a foolish combat, unjustifiable by the laws of God, and unworthy of a rational and christian man."

"Your opinions and mine are at variance on this subject, Miss Courtland," returned O'Carroll, coldly; "I shall not however, be slow in making mine known to Colonel Grahame, if he refuses me a satisfactory explanation."

The entrance of Amelia terminated the conversation, and Catherine did not regret it, since the excitement of O'Carroll rendered the topic under discussion additionally unpleasant, and increased the sadness, which, notwithstanding her confidence in Grahame's truth and honor, the incident of the note had created. But she felt that the trials of the day were not yet ended, when, at the dinner table she encountered the continued gloom of her father, and observed the dejection of Captain Talbot, which like a contagious disease, shortly infected the before serene and cheerful spirits of her cousin. O'Carroll, too, absorbed by his own painful reflections, was silent and abstracted, and the absence of his enlivening gaiety deepened the gloom of the party. Catherine had never before partaken of so unsocial a meal



in her father's house ; and she gladly seized the earliest moment, after the removal of the cloth, to withdraw from the circle, whose invincible gloom no efforts of hers could brighten.

O'Carroll also, unfitted for society, shortly left Talbot and the Major, to sip their wine together, while he resorted to his customary haunt on the borders of the forest. His restless mind was supplied with food for suspicion and conjecture, and he was more than usually eager in the desire of meeting the stranger. With folded arms and measured steps, he slowly traversed the oft frequented path, startled by the rustling of every withered leaf ; and in the ardor of expectation, repeatedly mistaking the waving of some distant evergreen, for the figure of the mysterious stranger, enveloped in the folds of his ample cloak.

But the evening stole away without bringing him ; and O'Carroll, as he had often done before, reluctantly resigned the hope which revived with every succeeding day. No longer on the watch for the stranger's appearance, he yielded to a train of absorbing meditation, and mechanically followed the windings of the path, heedless of external objects, and almost forgetful of the wish which had drawn him to the place. He had reached the termination of the path, and was turning to retrace his steps, when the sound of footsteps disturbed his reverie, and his heart bounded with sudden expectation, as he raised his head and perceived a person approaching rapidly towards him. Assured that he was at last, about to meet the object he had so long and anxiously sought, O'Carroll advanced confidently to meet him ; and though the man made an effort to pass on without speaking, the Captain placed himself so as to obstruct the passage, and exclaimed in a tone of triumph,

" You do not escape me thus ; I have watched for you till the very ground is worn with my footsteps, and now you shall not quit me before you have answered my demands."

" You mistake me for some one else, Captain O'Carroll," returned the person, in a voice which O'Carroll

instantly recognized as that of Colonel Grahame; and the eagerness of hope and curiosity was superseded by the mingled feelings of resentment, jealousy, and suspicion, not untinged by chagrin, at the mistake which had led him to accost the Colonel in a manner so ambiguous and abrupt. Resentment, however, prevailed over every other emotion, and he replied sarcastically,

"I had, indeed, no expectation of meeting Colonel Grahame at this hour in a place so remote from his quarters. The attraction must be powerful which allures him so frequently to this sequestered spot."

"And what, may I ask," returned Grahame, gaily, "is the attraction which draws you hither, O'Carroll? If you intend to penetrate my motives, it is but fair that I in return should inquire into yours."

"You have less right," said O'Carroll, haughtily, "to inquire into mine, than I have to *demand* that yours should be explained to me."

"I do not comprehend what gives either of us a superiority of right in this case," returned Grahame, surprised by the Captain's manner; "nor," he added, "can I conceive that we have the least authority to inquire into the motives of each other's conduct; our acquaintance I should hope, Captain O'Carroll, has been too long and intimate to justify doubt or suspicion in either mind, of their perfect purity and honor."

"Circumstances may sometimes justify doubt, where perfect confidence has before subsisted," returned O'Carroll.

"You are in a cynical mood to-night, Captain," said Grahame, astonished by his angry insinuations; "I confess I am equally at a loss to understand the meaning of your words, and to account for the unprovoked severity with which you have thought proper to assail me."

"To you," returned O'Carroll, in a sarcastic tone, "who have just been basking in the light of bright eyes, and listening to the soft accents of beauty, every other countenance must seem dark, and the accents of every other tongue harsh and discordant."

"How am I to understand you, sir?" asked Grahame, with rising indignation.

"As you please, or rather as you must, for it is difficult to misinterpret truth," returned O'Carroll, with affected coldness.

"I am unwilling to believe you a spy upon my actions, Captain O'Carroll," said the Colonel. "It is an office, which I should despise my dearest friend for assuming, under any pretence however plausible."

"And I, sir," said O'Carroll, bursting into wrath, "should scorn the man, as much as you could do, who was capable of acting such a part. I have disdained to watch your motions Colonel Grahame, though by so doing, I might long since have known all that accident has now revealed to me. I have defended you against the suspicions of others, and I have believed the mystery, in which you chose to shroud many of your actions, enforced by necessity, and not by that system of deceit and perfidy, which have destroyed my hopes, and wounded me to the very soul."

"I forgive your suspicions, and your injurious accusations, Captain O'Carroll," answered Grahame, "because I am persuaded you labor under some gross mistake. I have never consciously injured you, by thought, word, or deed; and I fear, I greatly fear the friendship which you professed, and which I was happy to believe sincere, must be built on a sandy foundation, since it so readily yields to the breath of slander, and the poisonous suggestions of jealousy and suspicion."

"The friendship which I cherished for you," returned O'Carroll, was alike fervent and sincere; but the closest bonds will be sundered by distrust, and though I could have pardoned you for rivalling me, I cannot forget that you strove to do it secretly, as if you thought me unworthy of the confidence which true friendship ever seeks to bestow, and which I have never in any instance witholden from you."

"All that you say," returned Grahame, "involves me in still deeper uncertainty. I have never either felt or expressed distrust of your honor or integrity; neith-

er have I ever withholden from you my confidence on affairs in which you were interested, I did not imagine you had any wish to be informed of my personal concerns, and those of a public nature, I did not feel authorized to communicate."

"I care not for public affairs," said O'Carroll, with increased impatience; "I am weary of war, of intrigues, of this contention for power and dominion; nor do I seek to know your personal concerns excepting when, as now, they involve my interest and honor."

"Explain to me how, and in what manner they involve them," returned Grahame, "and if I have unconsciously injured you (for it is impossible you should seriously suspect me of a premeditated design to do so), I assure you I will not refuse to make any atonement, which, as an honorable and just man, you shall deem requisite and proper."

"Oh what a goodly outside falsehood hath,"

muttered O'Carroll, in an under tone; then, as if resolved to come at once to the point, he said aloud in a determined tone,

"Assure me, Colonel Grahame, that you have not studied to deceive me; that you have not purposely concealed from me your knowledge of one whom you knew I was anxious to discover, and this, in order to promote your own wishes, to the utter annihilation of all my long and fondly cherished hopes. Assure me that you have not done this, and I will humbly confess my fault, in having doubted you; but acknowledge, and your life or mine must be sacrificed to the offended laws of honor."

Grahame smiled contemptuously, and it was well, perhaps, for the continuance of O'Carroll's self-possession, that the darkness prevented him from reading the expression of the Colonel's countenance, who however instantly replied,

"I can most truly assure you, Captain O'Carroll, that I have never sought to deceive you; neither have I

sought to conceal from your knowledge any individual in whom I believe you to be interested."

"Perhaps," said O'Carroll, in an agitated voice, "you have not yet discovered the loss of a billet which you this morning dropped at Major Courtland's. It is this which has occasioned my present inquiries. The handwriting, the seal were familiar to me; and impelled by the most powerful emotions, I ventured to read its contents. The act was unjustifiable, and I now make the only atonement in my power, that of imploring your pardon. I resisted the entreaties of Miss Courtland, and stifled the dictates of honor and of conscience; but I could not withstand the impulse of jealous love. Censure me, if you will, I care not; and now that I have made my confession, withhold not yours, nor do your conscience farther violence by seeking to deny your interest in this soft beauty, who, with such tender chiding upbraids you for an absence of *three long days*."

Grahame did not hear O'Carroll's avowal unmoved; but he was ever master of his passions, and he calmly replied,

"I certainly feel myself exculpated by this flagrant violation on your part, Captain O'Carroll, of one of the first and most imperious laws of honor, from every obligation to remove your unfounded suspicion, or to answer your unreasonable demands."

"And you cannot, dare not disavow your interest in this lady," exclaimed O'Carroll impetuously.

"I dare disavow nothing adverse to truth," returned Grahame; "nor do I wish to deny that I am deeply interested in her, as a lovely and unfortunate woman."

"Truly humane motives," exclaimed O'Carroll, with a sarcastic smile; "and of course," he added, "you neither wish nor expect to be united to her by any nearer ties than those of common sympathy."

"Captain O'Carroll," said Grahame, with haughty displeasure, "I can no longer submit to this inquisitorial examination, which I have only permitted at all from the hope of removing your idle jealousies. But I perceive them to become every moment more irrational;

and when you have informed me why you are so deeply solicitous about this lady, and so incensed at my intercourse with her, I shall take the liberty to wish you good night, and proceed on the course which you so unpropitiously interrupted."

"You insult me by requesting such information," exclaimed O'Carroll; "you, who have so often heard me speak of Marion Spencer, and who know so well the deep and painful interest I take in all that relates to her! Grahame, you have been the repository of my treasured secrets; into your bosom I have poured the story of my love, and of my griefs, and it is thus that you repay my confidence, thus that you stab me, with deliberate baseness, to the soul!"

"I do not, cannot comprehend you," exclaimed Grahame in unfeigned astonishment; "I know not of what you accuse me, or why you distrust me; nor can I conceive what connexion you imagine to exist between Miss Spencer and the lady of whom we were previously speaking."

"And do you still persist in denying them to be the same?" exclaimed O'Carroll, in a voice of unrestrained passion.

"I do," returned Grahame; "and I know not on what you ground your strange suspicion; which I declare to you is false and wholly unfounded."

"I cannot, cannot believe it," said O'Carroll; "proofs so strong I feel it impossible to doubt."

"Do as you please, Captain O'Carroll," said Grahame, coldly. "I once more solemnly assure you, that the lady of whom we have been speaking is altogether a different being from Miss Spencer. And now farewell; the friendship of one whom you are so ready to distrust, is not worth preserving."

He walked on, but O'Carroll hastily followed him; "Stay," he cried, "do not forsake me in this unhappy moment; tell me again that Marion Spencer is unknown to you; and yet it cannot be—that writing, the artless expressions, so like those which charmed away my heart; the seal, so exactly resembling that which was my earliest

gift of love ; all, all conspire to prove the truth of my suspicions."

"Calm yourself, O'Carroll," said the Colonel, pitying his distress, "let me persuade you to renounce these jealous fears ; I do assure you again and again, that I know nothing of Miss Spencer ; and if I did, I should wish only for the power to bestow her, were she worthy, on him who so faithfully loves her."

O'Carroll could no longer resist the noble and generous candor of Grahame, and seizing his hand with wonted cordiality, he exclaimed,

"Grahame, it is impossible even for jealous love to doubt you longer ; pardon my unjust violence ; I would dare to ask forgiveness only of one as calm, as rational, as superior to false accusation as yourself."

"I freely forgive you, O'Carroll," returned Grahame, "because I am convinced, that, had you not been led astray by an inflamed imagination, your cooler reason would not have permitted you to suspect my friendship or my honor. But pardon me if I intrude one word of advice ; when next you find passion likely to gain the ascendancy, seek to restrain its ebullitions, rather than wound a friend whom you had never cause to suspect, by expending them on him."

"Pardon me, Grahame," exclaimed the impetuous and sensitive O'Carroll ; "you cannot be more deeply wounded by my injustice, than I am by the reflection, that I have for a moment wronged the honor and integrity, which from my very soul I believe without a stain. I am ever headstrong and wilful ; and though warned to hear you before I uttered my condemnation, I met you with angry and reproachful words."

"And to whom," asked Grahame, his heart palpitating with hope, "am I indebted for even this word in my defence?"

"To whom should it be but Catherine Courtland?" said O'Carroll ; "the defender of the injured, and the protector of the oppressed. You owe her much, Colonel Grahame ; she pleaded most eloquently in your behalf, and declared with generous confidence that you

were incapable of being influenced by unworthy motives."

Grahame's heart bounded with unmingled delight, at this flattering proof of Catherine's unshaken confidence in the midst of all the doubts and suspicions cherished by those around her. After a moment passed in the silent indulgence of his grateful and pleasurable emotions, he said to O'Carroll,

"I owe Miss Courtland more than I dare attempt to express, and were there more minds as candid and as generous as hers, our purest motives would not be liable to censure, nor our most praiseworthy actions be misconstrued and condemned. I will only request you, Captain O'Carroll, when next you doubt me, to remember the injunction of my lovely and virtuous advocate; inform me with the candor of friendship why you distrust me; and if I cannot honorably exculpate my conduct, I will acknowledge myself a fair object for your utmost resentment."

"And will you also," asked O'Carroll, "forget and forgive the outrage of which I was guilty, in perusing what should have been regarded by me as sacred?"

"All, every thing," returned Grahame, "if you will exercise the candor which I request, and not act like a madman, as you have done to-night."

"My fiery temperament is uncontrollable," returned O'Carroll; "but it can never again become inflamed by doubts of you. You have endured my passionate violence and injustice with a calm and noble forbearance which none but you would have exercised. Had I always been guided by a mind as generous and as firm, I should perhaps have learned to discipline my own, and subdue my passions more effectually than I now do."

"Your candor in acknowledging a fault more than cancels the offence," said Grahame; "and even had you injured me deeply, I should feel it impossible not to love a mind where I find so much to admire and esteem. But I hope in time, my dear O'Carroll, to see every weed eradicated, and flowers worthy of so rich a soil, blooming in fragrance and perennial beauty."



"Do not hope too much," said O'Carroll; "I have been always transgressing and repenting from the day of my birth, and fear I shall do the same till that of my death. But the experience of this night will teach me to be less premature, if not less furious in my resentments. I should have a hearty penance to perform were Father Antony here; but as the good priest, fortunately for his comfort as well as mine, is ignorant of my offence, I shall make the stings of conscience suffice without the infliction of any other penalty. But will you take the note, that source of all this bitterness, or shall I consign it to the flames, where many a stirrer up of strife and sedition has before suffered, and with less show of justice too?"

"I will take it," said Grahame; then added hesitatingly, "I trust no eye beside your own has glanced over its contents?"

"None, I declare to you," returned O'Carroll. "Happening abruptly to enter the parlor, I surprised Miss Courtland with it in her hand. She found it on the carpet just after your departure, and was so intently examining the seal that I stood beside her before she noticed my entrance. Struck by the handwriting of the superscription, I took it rudely from Miss Courtland, without even asking her permission, and it was in vain that she endeavored to regain possession of it, or even to prevent my perusal of its contents. I cannot tell you with what eloquence she urged her entreaties, nor with what horror she regarded my resolute violation of all that was just and honorable. But I will not detain you longer; I trust I have freed Miss Courtland from any share of censure, and now farewell."

"She can never do any thing deserving of censure," returned Grahame; "and from me it is impossible she should ever incur it."

He took the note as he spoke; and bidding O'Carroll good night, turned into the lane, near the head of which they had been standing, and disappeared. A few moments after, the Captain heard him speak to his servant, and immediately the trampling of horses convinced him

that William had been waiting all this time for his master. O'Carroll then turned to pursue his way home.

The appearance of the heavens informed him that the evening was already far advanced ; and anxious to reach the house, he walked for some minutes with a step of unusual rapidity. But a crowd of busy thoughts thronged his mind, and unconsciously his speed slackened, he sunk into meditation, and with folded arms, eyes raised to the starlight heavens, and feet which scarcely seemed to move, he pursued his way along the narrow path. Once or twice he fancied he heard footsteps behind him, but he could see no one ; and vexed with himself for his idle imaginings, he uttered an exclamation of impatience, and resuming his rapid progress, soon reached the garden gate, through which he was about to pass, when a thrilling laugh from behind curdled his blood with its horrible expression, and he turned quickly round to detect the person, who, he was now certain, had been for some time following him. He could, however, only discern through the gloom, the indistinct outline of a figure, whose height seemed to him about the same as was that of the stranger, whom he had so often hoped in vain to meet.

Recollecting what he had before lost by the haughty fierceness of his demeanour, O'Carroll resolved, should this be the stranger, and, from his laugh of mingled scorn and insult, he thought it could be no other, to conduct himself with more caution and civility. Quelling, therefore, his rising wrath, he said in courteous accent,

"Friend, do you wish any thing of me."

"I wish any thing of you?" returned the man in a disdainful tone ; "I have no favors to ask of Captain O'Carroll ; but there are some which it is in my power to confer, if he is not too much the tool of Colonel Grahame to receive them."

"I am the tool of no man, fellow," retorted O'Carroll, angrily, and quite forgetful of his prudent resolves ; "nor will I submit to your insolence ; let the consequences be what they may, you shall receive the chastisement you merit."

"I find your fiery humor not much cooled by the nocturnal rambles you have taken in this frosty atmosphere since last we met," said the man, sarcastically. "But the bait took well, which the rebel Colonel made you swallow just now," he added, with another laugh, as he stalked past the irritated Captain, and seemed designing to walk on and leave him.

O'Carroll saw that the interview which he had so long desired, was on the point of terminating as abruptly and unsatisfactorily as the former one; and cursing his impetuosity, he caught the folds of his cloak as he passed, exclaiming in a milder and more persuasive tone,

"You must not quit me till you have explained the meaning of the hints with which you perplexed me in our last rencontre."

The man withdrew his cloak from the grasp of O'Carroll, and moving rapidly away, said, as he retreated,

"Ask the brave and *honorable* Colonel; he can tell you more than I know, and he will bear with your insolence, because—but no matter why; I will tell you that another time."

He disappeared when he had finished speaking, and O'Carroll, vexed by the disappointment, and by the tantalizing conduct of the man, remained for a few moments irresolute upon the spot. But at length resolving to think lightly of the affair, and consider the man a lunatic, for such he was seriously inclined to believe him, O'Carroll passed on through the garden to the house. When he entered the parlor, Major Courtland and Talbot were engaged at chess; Amelia was at work, and Catherine sat unoccupied upon the sofa. He placed himself beside her, and in a low voice related the occurrences of the evening. She listened with interest and emotion, happy to find her confidence in Grahame was not misplaced. She unhesitatingly pronounced the insinuations of the stranger false and malicious, and was gratified to find that they had not succeeded in reawakening O'Carroll's jealous prejudices. The man had avowed himself actuated by a wish for revenge, and it seemed apparent from his language, that Colonel Grahame was the object of his malice.

## CHAPTER VII.

"My love is thine to teach ; teach it but how,  
 And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn,  
 Any hard lesson that may do thee good."  
*Shakspeare.*

CAPTAIN TALBOT returned to Philadelphia on his parole a few days after the mortifying circumstance of his rejection. But when the first pang of wounded pride and affection was over, he began bitterly to repent the precipitation with which he had quitted the house of Major Courtland, and to sigh for the heartfelt and rational enjoyment of the society which he had voluntarily resigned. Though the distance was considerable from Philadelphia, he resolved to avail him of the privilege which was granted him, frequently to visit his friends ; and as time softened the poignancy of his regrets, he became again almost an inmate of Major Courtland's family, often spending several days in succession at the house, and whenever he rode, uniformly turning his horse's head in that direction.

In the frank and unreserved manners of Catherine, he found neither food for passion, nor rational ground for hope, and compelled to admit the conviction of her perfect indifference, he learned slowly and painfully to relinquish the wishes which he had so long fondly cherished. When he sought her love, it was almost with the assurance that it would be denied him, and the secret preparation which his mind had undergone, perhaps enabled him to meet the blow which finally destroyed his hopes, with more firmness than he could otherwise have done. Catherine observed with pleasure his gradually returning cheerfulness, and endeavoured to sooth the wound she had unwillingly inflicted, by the kindness of her manner and the tacit expression of those friendly and affectionate feelings which she sincerely

cherished towards him, and which was the only recompense she could offer for the disappointment she had caused him. She wished much that the constant and timid affection of Amelia might at last be reciprocated; for she thought her peculiarly calculated to form the happiness of a heart like Talbot's. In order to promote this desirable object, Catherine strove to draw forth the treasures of her cousin's mind, and to place her always in the most advantageous point of view to Talbot's observation. She often sought to engage them in conversation of local interest, which, by reviving early recollections, might also tend to revive that affection which the young man had once cherished for the playmate of his childish years. Catherine was delighted to observe that her efforts were not fruitless; since Talbot certainly conversed with Amelia more frequently, and apparently with more interest than formerly; while she, grateful for her cousin's kind wishes, and more deeply conscious, after every interview, how entirely her happiness depended upon Talbot, made a successful effort to throw off that awkward reserve which had so long clouded and embarrassed the native loveliness of her mind and person.

Talbot was as yet insensible to her charms. The image of Catherine had been too fondly cherished to be soon supplanted by another, and her graces and virtues furnished the dearest theme of his discourse with Amelia. From any other lips Amelia would have listened to these praises with delight; but she could not know that the heart dearest to her in life was fondly devoted to another, without a pang of exquisite suffering. She had, however, learned to exercise some of Catherine's self-command, and she not only listened to Talbot's enthusiastic praises without betraying her secret emotion, but even joined in them, and that with a sincerity and warmth which proceeded from a strong conviction of their justice.

After a time, even Talbot wearied of this theme. Convinced of Catherine's affection for another, and of her coldness towards himself, and flattered by the pleas-

ure with which Amelia received his slightest attentions, he began to devote them more exclusively her. In his visits he often found her alone, and he was always welcomed by her with a smile and a blush. In these solitary interviews the recollections of their childhood and of their mutual friends, furnished subjects of conversation as fruitful as those which Catherine's perfections had formerly supplied, and which, from Talbot's lips, were far dearer and more flattering to Amelia's heart. With sad and tender pleasure she listened to him when he spoke of her parents, and dwelt on the reminiscences of their childhood; that season of un-mixed happiness to which she looked back with emotions of fond regret. She was equally surprised and delighted by the interest with which he recalled a thousand circumstances faithfully cherished in her memory; but which she had too much reason for believing were long since faded from his; and tears of pleasurable emotion filled her eyes when she heard him declare those days of innocent enjoyment to have been the happiest of his life.

Amelia felt, however, that happy, exquisitely happy as they had been to her, she would willingly exchange whole years of such felicity for one short hour like that she now enjoyed. And though she often said to herself, "I have no reason to suppose his feelings changed, because he devotes to me the time which it would be no longer right or proper to bestow on my cousin;" yet she found it impossible to crush the hope which was springing in her heart, and which diffused over her countenance and person, an air of brightness and animation which they had not worn since first saddened by the depressing consciousness of her unhappy passion.

To Talbot she seemed a new creature; and charmed by the magical transformation of which he was, as yet, so far from suspecting himself to be the cause, he delighted to speak of scenes and events in which they had been mutually interested, and to watch, as he did so, the rapid variations of her voice and complexion. A slight resemblance, which, at such moments he fancied he could

trace in her countenance to her cousin, rendered the scrutiny still more fascinating; and strange as it may seem, he began in process of time to persuade himself that the softness and excessive delicacy of Amelia were almost as charming as the spirit and independence which he so much admired in Catherine, chastened as they were, by all that is lovely and attractive in the female character.

There are few minds, and we doubt if there are any among the "lordly sex," so constant and devoted as to cherish a passion after it has become entirely hopeless; and whatever our readers may think and say to the contrary, we, at least, profess ourselves of Rosalind's opinion, "that men have died and worms have eat them, but not for love." At all events, Captain Talbot, ardently as he loved, and bitterly as he had mourned the destruction of his dearest hopes, soon found, that even passion, strong and devoted as his own, could not long subsist without its natural aliment.

Instead, however, of declining, it seemed only to have changed its object; and perhaps the vanity which Captain Talbot shared in common with his fellow-men, assisted in promoting this revolution. Left often for hours alone in Amelia's society, with no other object to engross his attention, he could not long remain insensible to the pleasure which his presence gave her; he could not misconstrue the blush with which she welcomed him, nor the look of sadness with which she received his farewell. At first he rejected with indignation the suspicions which those appearances awakened, or if ever he for a moment found himself recalling them without displeasure, he forcibly banished them from his mind, and reproached himself for the violation of that faith which he had secretly resolved, for Catherine's sake, never to bestow on any other woman. Sometimes he reproved his presumptuous vanity for supposing that Miss Dunbar would voluntarily and unsought have bestowed on him her affections; but every succeeding visit forced upon him the conviction he was so reluctant to admit; and, compelled him to see that he was ten-

derly beloved, he censured himself with all the bitterness which a generous mind might be supposed to feel on knowing that it had wilfully wounded the peace and disregarded the love of an amiable and virtuous woman.

He recalled the wishes of their parents, the kindness which Colonel Dunbar had shewn him in this land of strangers, and the happy intimacy which had ever united the two families. The longer he dwelt upon these circumstances the deeper and more tender became his interest in the orphan daughter of his best and earliest friends.

Ardently as the parents of Captain Talbot had wished to see him united to Amelia Dunbar, they had prudently concealed from him their wishes ;—chiefly anxious for his happiness, and unwilling to influence him in an affair of so much importance. During his long absence on the continent, Amelia had been to them as a daughter, and her sweetness, her candor, her amiable and affectionate disposition, together with the light in which they permitted themselves to view her, as the future wife of their son, had endeared her to them as much as if she had been their only child. But the indifference with which, when they again met, Talbot appeared to regard her, filled them with disappointment and regret, and obliged them to relinquish all hopes of the wished for alliance.

Soon after Talbot's arrival in America he saw and loved Catherine Courtland ; and feeling how much his happiness depended upon her, he wrote to his parents, acquainting them with his passion, and requesting their permission to address her. They granted it without delay, though Lady Talbot in a letter to her son, could not refrain from expressing the wish that it had been consistent with his happiness to have given them Amelia Dunbar for a daughter, instead of a stranger, who could feel in them no interest. Talbot thought little of this passage at the time of its reception ; but no sooner had Amelia ceased to be an object of indifference to him than he recurred to it and to some expressions in a letter of more recent date, which signified the same wish in a still more explicit manner. To one in particular, re-



ceived after the news of Colonel Dunbar's death had reached England, he now turned, and read the following sentence with extreme emotion.

"Tell my dear Amelia, we feel for her the affection and solicitude of parents, and so long as Heaven sees fit to spare my life, she shall never want a mother's care and love. Bid her haste to us; our arms are open to receive her; and her, who has so often comforted us in affliction, it shall now be our delight to sooth and make happy. We do not reproach you, Talbot, for the choice which you have made; our only wish is that it may promote your happiness. But had Amelia Dunbar been the chosen object of your love, it would have realized our fondest wishes and given assurance of your own felicity."

Talbot sighed, as, for the third time, he finished reading the passage, and slowly folding the letter, he exclaimed,

"And I have never even told her of my mother's love and sympathy! selfish and unfeeling that I am, in the midst of my own pursuits, I have been unmindful of her sorrows, and withheld from her those expressions of kindness and affection, which would have been as balm to her wounded heart!"

Thrusting the letter into his pocket, he ordered his horse and immediately set off for Major Courtland's. He arrived some time before the dinner hour, and was agreeably surprised to find Amelia alone in the parlor. Several letters were lying on her lap, and as she rose with haste and embarrassment to receive him, they fell upon the floor. As Captain Talbot stooped to take them up, he recognised the handwriting of Colonel Dunbar, and looking earnestly at Amelia, perceived by the traces of recent emotion visible in her countenance, that she had been agitated by the perusal of her father's letters. This conviction softened his feelings still more towards her, and he said in a tone of gentle reproach,

"I wish I had arrived an hour earlier, Amelia; or, at least, before these sad letters were opened."

"They are often opened, Captain Talbot," she replied; "I almost daily read in them the expressions of my dear father's affection. My uncle," she added, "has gone to dine with a friend a few miles distant, and Catherine has ridden out on horseback with Captain O'Carroll. She was unwilling to leave me alone, but I prevailed on her to go; and I have been so much engrossed by my melancholy occupation as quite to disregard the lapse of time."

"Melancholy indeed!" repeated Talbot, "far too melancholy to occupy so many of your solitary hours."

"All my occupations and pleasures, Captain Talbot, must in future be tinged with the sadness of the past," she replied; "nor would I exchange the pensive satisfaction, which I derive from these sweet remembrances of my dear father's affection, for the gayest delights which the world has to bestow."

"I can easily conceive," said Talbot, "the gratification which they must yield to a mind of sensibility, like yours; but to encourage the constant recurrence of gloomy images, and suffer the mind to dwell with perpetual regret, on the memory of departed friends, renders it indifferent to society, and inspires it with disgust for the most innocent and rational enjoyments of life."

"These letters can never produce an effect like that," said Amelia; "but while I feel, that I have many things still to attach me to the world, I feel also, that the dearest ties which bound me to it, are forever severed; and that to me, its gaieties and its pleasures must be henceforth empty and unattractive."

"But new ties," said Talbot, "dearer, far dearer, even than those of parental love, may fasten you again to earth; nor shall a mother's love be wanting to perfect your happiness; for even now it invites you to her arms, with a tenderness, which I am sure you cannot doubt."

He drew forth his mother's letter, as he spoke, though Amelia, agitated by his words, scarcely dared to raise

her eyes ; and without waiting for her to reply, he continued :

" I received this, at a time when my mind was too much engrossed and excited, to attend a moment to its contents ; and aware that my mother wrote to you at the same period, I thought less of communicating this testimony of her sympathy and affection, than I should otherwise have done. But, in reperusing it this morning, I could not resist the wish of bringing it to you, that you might see with what tenderness she loves you, with what solicitude she thinks of your welfare, and with what earnestness she expresses her desire to supply the place of your own lamented mother."

Lady Talbot had expressed all this, and more than this in her truly maternal letter to Amelia, who could not now, however, hear it repeated from the lips of her son without the most powerful emotion ; and unable to speak, and not daring to look at Talbot, she received the letter in silence from his hand. That part of the sentence, which related to his choice of a wife was fortunately on the opposite page, and while Amelia read the passage to which he pointed, he watched with interest the expressive variations of her countenance. Feeling deeply the forlornness of her orphan state, she was exquisitely alive to every act and expression of kindness ; but those of so much tenderness, from a friend who from her earliest infancy had been to her a second mother, deeply touched her grateful and affectionate heart ; and before she had read half the sentence the letters swam before her, and tears, which she found it impossible to restrain, fell fast upon the paper.

Talbot, shocked and distressed, bent eagerly towards her.

" My dear Amelia !" was his tender and involuntary expression, " these words have awakened some painful reminiscence, and I have done wrong in requesting you to read them."

" These are tears of grateful pleasure and affection, Talbot," she replied, hastily brushing them away. " Your mother's kindness effects me beyond express-

ion ; it has been unremitted from my infancy, and she still brightens with it this hour of sorrow and bereavement. I love my uncle ; and my cousin has been to me the kindest and tenderest of friends ; but still I cannot forget that I am in a land of strangers, and my heart yearns for the friends of my childhood ! I long to embrace them, to revisit the scenes of my birth, to tread again those haunts, hallowed by the remembrance of my parents ; where every object will speak to me of them, and sooth me with the recollection of earlier and happier days."

"And you will go then?" said Talbot ; "you will accept my mother's invitation, and be to her a daughter, far more worthy of her love, far more capable of contributing to her happiness, than ever her absent son has been."

"You are not aware, perhaps," said Amelia, "that your father is my guardian, and the wish which he expresses for my return, my inclination prompts me to interpret as a command."

"I am certain, however," said Talbot, "it was not his intention to impose a command ; but only to express a wish, which might tend to promote your happiness."

"I know it well," returned Amelia ; "but even were the wish less agreeable to me than it is, I would comply with it, because I both respect and love Sir William, and because I know my father would desire me to submit entirely to his direction. I shall ever remember, with what solemnity he consigned me to the care and affection of your parents, in case of his own and my mother's death. Her health rendered even the hope of her return delusive ; and as if inspired with a presentiment of his own melancholy fate, he wrote his will and appointed my guardian ; and as the ship in which we embarked, receded from the beloved shores of our country, I shall never forget the look of fond and mournful regret, with which he continued to regard them, till darkness veiled them from our view."

"Many a brave heart then took its last farewell of

England," said Talbot, "and many more which now beat warm and high, shall moulder far from the green shores to which they vainly hope to return."

"May Heaven interpose to heal this unhappy quarrel," said Amelia, "before any more victims have perished in its cause. All the good which may result from it, cannot atone for the hopes which it has blighted, the thousand ties of affection, which it has relentlessly torn asunder."

"It is sad indeed," exclaimed Talbot, "to reflect on private sorrows in a time like this. It softens the sternest heart, unnerves the most vigorous arm, and sinks the hero to a man. I confess I am sickened with the miseries of war; were our efforts effective, I would think only of the public good and force myself to disregard the anguish of domestic life; but three years have already passed in a vain and bloody struggle, and still we are not one step nearer to the object of our wishes. I believe when this war with America is ended, I shall throw up my commission, return to Talbot Hall, talk politics, and read newspapers with my father; nurse exotics with my mother, and read, converse, walk, and ride with Amelia, as I was wont to do when she was my fair and gentle little playmate, and I a rude boy who had not yet learned the value of the happiness I enjoyed."

A blush of delight stole over Amelia's countenance, as she listened to this playful sketch, so like the picture which her own hopes had colored and dwelt upon for years; but she replied only by a sigh and a smile of silent eloquence.

Talbot did not love Amelia, with the passion and ardor which had characterized his affection for her cousin; but he was far from regarding her with indifference, and the consciousness of her attachment to him, together with the interest inspired by her peculiar situation, gave a tenderness to his sentiments for her, of which they might otherwise have been destitute. It was impossible for him not to perceive the influence which he possessed over her happiness, and the bright blush, the

smile, the half suppressed sigh, with which she replied to his description of the manner in which he would spend his time at Talbot Hall, seemed, with so much endearing and innocent artlessness, to express her affection and delight, that Talbot felt it unmanly and ungenerous to trifle with a heart so guileless, by delaying a declaration which he had determined to make, and which, since there was no obstacle in the way, could not be made too soon.

He was meditating in what manner to open the subject, when the trampling of horses announced the return of Catherine and O'Carroll; and Talbot was not much pleased, when Amelia asked if it was not Colonel Grahame, who accompanied them. Notwithstanding his generosity of feeling and of sentiment, Talbot had never been able to forgive Grahame for having rivalled him in the affections of Catherine. His pride had received an incurable wound, and with a countenance which expressed his chagrin at this interruption, he turned towards the window, to ascertain if the officer, who rode beside Catherine, was the Colonel.

O'Carroll rode a little in the rear, amusing himself with a large Newfoundland dog, which ran beside his horse, jumping, when incited by his whip, quite up to the saddle and performing around him all sorts of grotesque and amusing gambols.

Grahame and Catherine preceded him, and as they rode side by side up the avenue, seemed deeply engrossed by interesting conversation. In defiance of pique and prejudice, Talbot could not but admire the fine figure of the Colonel, now exhibited to the utmost advantage, as well as the exceeding ease and grace, with which he restrained the fiery motions of the high-spirited animal on which he was mounted. They reached the house in a few moments, and though Talbot hastened to the door to assist Catherine in alighting, she gave her hand to Grahame, just as he reached her, and sprang lightly from her saddle. Vexed at this trifling incident, he coldly returned the Colonel's courteous salutation, and followed Catherine in silence to the parlor. Her

brilliant complexion was heightened by the air and exercise of the morning; her fine eyes sparkled with gaiety and happiness, and her whole countenance and figure seemed invested with additional loveliness and grace. Talbot, though he was resolved to think Amelia as interesting, if not as beautiful as her cousin, paid involuntary homage to the charms of Catherine, by a gaze of such fixed and unequivocal admiration, that it deepened the glowing roses on her cheeks; but it faded those, which the happiness of the past hour had expanded on Amelia's. The uneasiness with which Catherine endured his scrutiny, recalled him to recollection; and with an air of suddenly assumed indifference, he began to caress the dog which had followed O'Carroll to the parlor.

"This is an acquaintance of your's, Amelia," said Catherine, kindly desirous to dispel the embarrassment, which still appeared through Talbot's affected carelessness; stroking the shaggy head of the huge dog, as she spoke.

"Of mine, cousin?" returned Amelia; "I do not recollect ever to have seen the animal before."

"But you probably recollect the day," said Catherine, "when I climbed the rock in the forest, to gather mosses, and you were so alarmed by the Indian and his dog; and this very respectable animal is the identical quadruped, who then intruded upon us so unceremoniously."

"And doubtless intended only to bark his apology for doing so, Miss Dunbar," said O'Carroll, "and which you, in terror, mistook for an uncivil challenge of defiance."

"I assure you," said Amelia, "whatever might have been his intention, the shaggy creature approached me with no very conciliatory aspect, but with glaring eyes, and jaws so formidably distended, that I was anxious only to escape from him."

"You must pardon him, Miss Dunbar," said Gra-hame; "he is quite unused to the society of ladies, and only now admitted by courtesy, which indeed he has

hardly deserved this morning; for though usually gentle and well disposed, he thought proper to bark at Miss Courtland's horse, which so irritated the impetuous animal, that her skill and presence of mind alone enabled her to preserve her seat."

"He only curvetted a little," said Catherine, "and to that I am accustomed; and indeed, Colonel Grahame, I think the dog was incited to bark at us by a boy whom I saw playing with him, the moment before, and who ran away over the fields, when you appeared."

"I believe I must take the animal again under my own guidance," said Grahame; "he has been of late, so much with the Indian Ohmeina, that I find him often in mischief; though he is, in reality, one of the most noble and sagacious of his species. Come hither, Victor, and let Miss Dunbar see that you are as mild in peace, as she thought you terrible in war."

The dog obeyed the voice of his master, and breaking from Captain Talbot's caresses, approached the Colonel, wagging his tail with pleasure. Resting his paws upon his master's knee, he raised his eyes full of grateful affection to his face, as if waiting to know his wishes. Amelia admired the intelligence of his countenance, and Grahame made him exhibit various feats of sagacity, which she and Catherine repaid with caresses, surprised and delighted by the wonderful instinct, which seemed to partake the dignity of reason and reflection.

"He should wear a collar," said O'Carroll; "some one may allure him away, and he is too valuable an animal to lose."

"I should, indeed, regret to lose him," said Grahame, "but unless compelled, he would follow no one far from me. It has been several times attempted, and he has traced me thirty or forty miles, through towns, villages, across rivers, and over mountains, till he found me. When he first came into my possession, about six years since, he wore a collar, which he soon outgrew, and I have never yet replaced it. But I think when this season of warfare is ended, should Victor and I survive



to enjoy the tranquillity of home, I shall honor his old age with a collar, on which, in letters of brass, I can cause his virtues to be engraved and emblazoned as they merit."

"But what is this glittering among his shaggy hair?" asked O'Carroll, who had been for some minutes patting the head and broad shoulders of the animal; "it seems a decoration fitter for a lady's lap dog, than for the neck of such a wolf-like quadruped as this."

As he spoke, he drew from the dog's throat a slender chain of gold, which had several times encircled it; and till revealed by O'Carroll's scrutiny, had been completely hidden beneath the creature's thick and shaggy hair.

"Some lady's favor, I think," exclaimed Talbot, enjoying the Colonel's perplexity; "is there not a perfumed billet-doux attached to the bauble, O'Carroll?"

"It would, in truth, be an ingenious method of conveying one," said Grahame, with an air which at once checked the satire of Talbot; "but as I am not often honored with such tokens, I fear you will search for one in vain."

"Pardon me, sir," said Talbot, with a look of chagrin, "no one would suspect you of any clandestine intercourse; and I doubt not even the miracle of the chain can be accounted for in a very rational and common-place way."

"You are right, sir," returned Grahame; "the dog is almost the constant companion of the Indian Minoya, who has a particular fancy for decorating him with her own ornaments, which I have often found before, hidden beneath his hair."

"Yes, here is a string of small beads, which I dare swear are some of her own manufacture," said O'Carroll, who had been searching Victor's neck for other trinkets, while the dog, with his head resting on the sofa patiently permitted the investigation, as if it was one to which he was daily accustomed.

"They bear rather more resemblance to the usual fashion of savage ornaments," said Talbot, "than this

chain of fine gold, which I should never suspect to be the workmanship of American Indians."

"It was probably given to Minoya," said Catherine, vexed by the unusual asperity of Talbot, and anxious for her own sake, to believe that no hand fairer than the Indian's had twined this trinket around the neck of Grahame's dog. "She has many baubles," added Catherine, "which you have seen me wear, and which you might wonder to see adorning her person."

Catherine blushed, as she met the eyes of Grahame fixed upon her, with a grateful and admiring expression, and she was not sorry that a summons to dinner just then, terminated the conversation. Grahame took possession of the chain, which O'Carroll yielded under the conviction that it could only belong to the lady, whose writing he had mistaken for that of Miss Spencer. The topic was not again renewed, and Talbot, conscious that from motives of pique and jealousy, he had displayed a degree of acrimony quite unbecoming, exerted himself to atone for it, by the affability of his manner towards Grahame; who without noticing the change, treated him with the same easy and wellbred politeness which uniformly marked his demeanour. Cheerfulness and vivacity prevailed, all seemed happy and disposed to gaiety, and the dinner hour passed pleasantly, and but too swiftly away.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
 I have no relish of them ; but abound  
 In the division of each several crime,  
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
 Uproar the universal peace, confound  
 All unity on earth.

*Shakespeare.*

SINCE the evening of Captain O'Carroll's conversation with Colonel Grahame, he had notwithstanding the malicious insinuations of the stranger, compelled himself to dismiss every suspicion ; and ashamed of his injustice, he conducted himself towards the Colonel with even more cordial and friendly interest than before. He still thought, with some surprise, of the writing which had so exactly resembled that of Marion Spencer ; and felt a desire to see the lady, with whom Grahame held so secret and mysterious an intercourse. Fearful, however, of being thought a spy upon his actions, and averse to another unsatisfactory encounter with the singular being, who, he began to suspect, was actuated by motives of the worst kind, he almost deserted his favorite walk on the confines of the forest, except occasionally, when he accompanied the ladies in a morning excursion.

In the mean time, several weeks passed rapidly away, and Talbot was the declared lover of the happy Amelia. Major Courtland, compelled to renounce the hope of his union with Catherine, could not refuse to sanction his addresses to Amelia, though he scarcely, till then, knew the depth of his disappointment, or the confidence with which he had presumed on Catherine's final compliance with his wishes.

Happy in the fulfilment of her cousin's hopes, and assured that so calm and rational an affection would produce permanent and increasing happiness, Catherine

rine persuaded herself that her father could not long continue to regret the disappointment, which had proved so fortunate for Amelia. Convinced also, that her own hopes were destined to be destroyed, she sought to wean them from the object, on whom, before she was herself aware, she had been startled to find them deeply fixed. Her father's health too, which seemed to be declining, increased her uneasiness and alarm; and anxious to atone for the regret which she had caused him, as well as desirous to try the effect which change of air and scene might produce upon his constitution, she listened without opposition to his proposal of returning to England. Nay, she even urged his going, conscious that her wishes only had detained him for so long a time in America, and desirous to express her gratitude for his indulgence, by a cheerful compliance with his inclinations.

Although Major Courtland had been, for so many years an inhabitant of the New World, he still retained the hereditary estates, which had descended to him through many generations, and for which he cherished a veneration and respect, so great that even the idea of their becoming the property of a stranger, seemed to him almost sacrilegious. They yielded him a handsome revenue, which was annually transmitted by his agent; and though the wish, that his remains should rest beside the wife whom he had early lost, and still lamented, continued firm, he was desirous to spend some years amidst the scenes and friends of his youth, and take of them a last farewell before he left them, to return no more. He hoped also, there to form for Catherine, a connexion suitable to her birth, and which should effectually weaken the partialities, and sever the ties, which now bound her so strongly to America. The attentions of Colonel Grahame, however, which he had once viewed with such jealous disapprobation, he began to consider, as the mere ebullitions of gallantry, such as a gay young soldier is ever wont to render to a beautiful and disengaged woman; else why had he made no serious proposals, when so many opportunities

had occurred in which he might have declared himself?

Catherine saw by her father's reviving cordiality to Grahame, that his suspicions were no longer awake ; but she herself was conscious that the Colonel loved her passionately ; and this certainty filled her heart with a calm and delicious pleasure, even while assured that her love was destined to prove unfortunate. She saw that Grahame was unhappy ; from his own lips she had received the intimation, that cruel circumstances forbade the attainment of his wishes, though he had not revealed those circumstances, and had even said that he was not at liberty to do it. But so pure and disinterested was her love, that she preferred his honor to her own happiness, and unless the barrier which separated them could be removed, consistently with that perfect uprightness which she so much admired, she was content to have it remain ; and to hide in the recesses of her own heart, the passion with which he had inspired her.

Thus passed away the winter. The middle of March arrived, and the heralds of returning spring reminded Catherine, that the circle, which during the short cessation of hostilities, she had drawn around her, must soon be broken and dispersed. The reflection gave her pain, and the symptoms of reviving nature, which she had ever before hailed with rapturous delight, she now contemplated with sensations of melancholy regret.

Not so O'Carroll. Though happy in his present situation, and sincerely attached to every member of the little society, with which for several months he had been so intimately connected ; yet he longed to retread his native shores ; and with the unrepressed enthusiasm of his character, he watched the slow progress of vegetation, and numbered the days and weeks, which must probably elapse before the green fields of Erin would again expand to his delighted eyes. He had applied, through the mediation of Colonel Grahame, for permission to return home in the spring, without rejoining the captured army, which was still waiting at Cambridge,

for further orders ; though many of the officers had already left it, and sailed for England. O'Carroll was desirous that Major Courtland should take passage in the same vessel with himself, and as he expected to sail from New York, he was continually urging him to make preparations for his departure, and repair to that city, in order to be in readiness for the first opportunity. The Major, however, as yet scarcely decided in his own mind, gave him no positive promise, and O'Carroll sometimes amused, but oftener vexed, by his vacillation, frequently left him, with a determination never again to renew his entreaties.

One evening when he had been unusually importunate, and the Major unusually perverse, O'Carroll flung from him in a pet, and renewing his often formed, and often broken resolution, walked slowly to the garden, where from a slight eminence, he stood for some time watching the declining sun, which was sinking to rest, with the soft and mild splendor of a vernal evening. As its last rays sunk below the horizon, he turned to quit the spot ; but the fragrant breeze was so delicious, the sky so bright and cloudless, that he felt a wish to extend his walk ; and opening the small gate, at the extremity of the garden, he struck into the path which had been the scene of so many adventures, and which he had not visited in an evening, since his explanation with Grahame.

The face of nature was rapidly changing from its late desolate and barren appearance. In many sheltered spots, the earth had assumed a hue of the brightest green, and among the forest trees, there were some already putting forth their tender foliage. The dark tassels of the elm, and the scarlet flowers of the maple were peculiarly conspicuous ; and the willow and the alder were fringed with the long catkins, which burst forth under the earliest influences of spring. O'Carroll viewed with rapture, these lovely harbingers of reviving nature, and as he walked gaily forward, he thought, Before these trees which are now bursting into beauty, shall be again despoiled of their verdure, I shall have

"And why do you provoke me to do so by your conduct?" asked O'Carroll, "and by refusing to communicate that which you say it concerns me to know."

"I refused because you demanded it of me in a tone of authority, which I disdained to obey," returned the man.

"Then if it is proper to be known," said O'Carroll, "if it at all concerns me or my friends, I ask you, as I would ask one whom I knew to be the very soul of honor and of justice, to reveal it to me, that I may regulate my conduct accordingly."

"But if I do," said the man, "that smooth-tongued Grahame will cozen you into the belief, that all I have said is false and unworthy of credit."

"He will cozen me into no belief inconsistent with truth and honor," said O'Carroll; "but what interest has he in this communication? and why is it that you seek to excite suspicion in my mind against him?"

"And have you no cause to suspect him?" asked the man; "no cause to couple treachery, falsehood, and dishonor with his name?"

"None, none in the world;" replied O'Carroll, quickly.

"Foolish, credulous man!" exclaimed the stranger, with a laugh of scorn and derision. "You saw the writing of Marion Spencer; you knew it well; yet when you brought your accusation to this arch hypocrite, you suffered yourself to be imposed on by his specious pretences, and soothed by the flattery with which he sought to beguile you. Awed by his show of injured honor and offended dignity, you believed his artful inventions, and became the dupe of the traitorous rebel, who laughs at your credulity, and triumphs in the success of his villainy."

O'Carroll trembled with rage and jealousy; and in a voice choked with passion, he exclaimed,

"And was it Marion Spencer's writing? Tell me but that, and let me haste to seek the vengeance which alone can wash away the remembrance of my injury."

"What! and will you take life?" exclaimed the man, in an accent of affected horror.

"Life!" returned O'Carroll; "yes, twenty lives! what else can atone for this deep, this deadly injury? Fool, dupe that I was, to believe the pretexts of this designing villain."

"You a fool and a dupe!" said the man, with pretended surprise; "not many weeks have passed, I think, since you threatened to chastise me for saying so; though had you believed me then, it might have been of some service to you before now."

"Fellow!" exclaimed O'Carroll; no longer master of himself, "how dare you provoke me in this manner? you seem bent to torture and perplex me; but by Heaven, I will endure it no longer. Tell me where to find Marion Spencer, or doff that cloak of darkness, and let me satisfy myself that the devil's cloven foot is not hidden beneath it."

"Have a care, Captain O'Carroll," said the man, retreating a few steps, and laying his hand upon his pistol. "Remember, I am not to be forced into any confession or discovery. Touch me only with an intention of violence, and Grahame, in despite of all you can say or do, shall win your mistress, and triumph over you in love, as he has before done in arms."

"You imagine me in your power," said O'Carroll; "and if I am so, you shall use it as I direct, or else return to the smoky dominions, from whence in very truth I believe you came, and leave me to dispose of Grahame and his mistress without your assistance. But off with this cloak at all events, that I may identify your person as well as I am able by the light of that diin moon."

He laid hold of the man's cloak, as he spoke, who, finding it impossible to shake off the Captain's nervous grasp, held the garment closely round him with one hand, and seizing his pistol with the other, said, while with a determined air he pointed it at O'Carroll's heart,

"Captain O'Carroll, I show more mercy than you deserve, when I promise you your life on condition that you release your hold, and make no farther attempt to



greeted the shores of Ireland, and wandered, with those most dear to me, amidst the groves of my paternal land.

Love of country was one of the strongest passions in O'Carroll's breast, and it seemed to have acquired additional strength and ardor, by the long period of absence which had separated him from the land of his nativity. With eager impatience, he longed for the moment, when his foot should again press its beloved soil, though during his solitary walk the vivacity of his feelings became gradually saddened by the images which forced themselves upon him. He imagined how much more exquisite would have been his feelings, how much sweeter his anticipations, were Marion waiting to receive and welcome him; indulging his regrets, till they blunted every pleasurable emotion, and made him for the time completely wretched. At length, however, ashamed to find himself so entirely subdued, he aroused his dormant energy, and shaking off the weakness which oppressed him, exclaimed aloud,

"I will not think of her! I will not indulge remembrances which palsy every faculty of my soul!"

"Think you that manly resolution will hold good, till the moon wanes again?" said a voice, which it was impossible for O'Carroll to mistake; and turning hastily around, he perceived the unwelcome stranger standing directly in the path. Surprised and vexed (for, suspecting the wickedness of his motives, he felt no wish again to encounter him), O'Carroll drew back and said, in a tone of haughty displeasure,

"Am I forever to be intruded upon thus, sir? I had hoped that my long absence from this place, on purpose to avoid you, might have taught you that your presence is unwelcome. When I resort here, it is to enjoy my own meditations free from the interruption of any one."

"Are they so very pleasant, Captain O'Carroll?" asked the man with a sneer, "that you are loath to have them interrupted!"

"It matters nothing to you," exclaimed O'Carroll, "whether they are pleasant or otherwise; they shall not

be disturbed by your insolence ; so quit me directly, or inform me why it is that you thus haunt my path !”

“ Perhaps I may not choose to do either,” replied the man in a tone of cool defiance, which irritated O’Carroll beyond endurance ; and he exclaimed,

“ But you shall be allowed no choice ; and unless you do one or the other, and that quickly too, I will give you the chastisement with which I have so long menaced you. I am armed, and bid you beware how you tempt my anger.”

“ And I am not defenceless,” said the man, and partially unclosing his cloak, he revealed a dirk and pair of pistols. “ These have done me good service before now,” he added ; “ and though I did not design to use them at present, I shall not be slow to do so if my safety demands it.”

“ Your safety will be best ensured by quitting my presence with due speed, and leaving me to pursue my walk alone,” said O’Carroll, contemptuously.

“ As I have no apprehensions for my safety,” returned the man, “ I shall indulge myself with your society a little longer ; perhaps we may be of some service to each other before we separate.”

O’Carroll was completely at a loss in what manner to conduct himself. He was unwilling to proceed to violence with the fellow ; and yet he found it extremely difficult to brook his sarcastic and deliberate insolence. After a moment’s hesitation, he adopted the prudent resolution of acting for once with moderation ; and turning to the man, he said,

“ It is impossible that we can ever be of the least service to each other ; and since, for what reason I know not, you persist in following me, I shall return home, and take precautions which shall effectually prevent my being annoyed with you in future.”

“ Had you been less violent at first,” returned the man, “ you might have learned all I have to say. But though no injury was offered, you chose as on former occasions ; rather to menace than conciliate me.”

patient only to meet the false friend, who with such deliberate baseness had wounded and betrayed him.

The shallow brook was easily crossed on a rude bridge of moss and stones ; and after walking for a short space among the tall trees which grew thickly in the little valley, they emerged upon an open space, open compared to the thicket through which they had just passed, and O'Carroll was partially awakened from his absorbing meditations by the glimmer of a light, which apparently proceeded from a dwelling at no great distance. His guide directed his steps towards it, and O'Carroll observed that he moved with extreme caution as they approached a low house scarcely distinguishable in the uncertain light from the grey rock against which it stood. All around was profoundly quiet ; the very trees which sheltered it, seemed sleeping in the moonlight, and the brook which glided past it murmured with a low and gentle sound as if fearful of disturbing the perfect stillness of the scene. The house itself was of the meanest kind, and very old and ruinous. It was screened from observation by a group of forest trees, which, when clothed in their summer drapery, must have completely buried it in their deep shade. Behind it rose a craggy rock covered with dwarf cedars and other diminutive shrubs, among which a few tall trees towered here and there, like giants above the pigmy race by which they were surrounded.

As O'Carroll followed his guide past the small window of the dwelling, his attention was caught by a group of figures which appeared within, and he would have stopped to identify the persons who composed it, but the man, observing his design, caught his arm and drew him forcibly along, at the same time making a motion which indicated his fear of discovery. The Captain yielded to the will of his conductor ; and after passing the house he led him to the foot of the rock, at some distance beyond it. The man instantly began to ascend, and directed O'Carroll to do the same. After climbing to some height the stranger turned towards the house and walked in a horizontal direction, holding by the

shrubs, and moving with ease, and even with rapidity, along the uneven surface of the rock till he came to a point considerably above the dwelling. He then began to descend, and soon reached a kind of natural platform on a level with the roof of the cottage, below which appeared a window, through whose small diamond-shaped panes emanated the same light which had streamed from that on the opposite side.

The man pointed to it, and stooping down, looked for some time through the window; then drawing back, motioned O'Carroll to go forward and satisfy his curiosity. The Captain, who with some difficulty had followed his singular conductor along the intricate and rocky way, was waiting with extreme impatience, to examine the interior of the dwelling, which they had approached with such extreme caution. More than once, he had been on the point of breaking from the authority, which his guide exercised with no little arrogance; but he reflected, that an open breach at this crisis might disappoint the object he had come hither to attain; and subduing his anger and impatience, he remained silent and passive till the moment, when the man at length directed him to look through the window of the cottage.

His heart beat quick and high at the moment, when he was about to terminate the suspense, which had been prolonged till it amounted to positive agony; and in order to see to better advantage, he threw himself upon his knees and stooped forward, eager, yet trembling to draw aside the curtain, which still concealed from him the certainty and extent of his injuries. The deep and solemn voice of the stranger, which had not before been audible since the commencement of their walk, now sounded with a warning tone, as it repeated in his ear, the words, "*Remember and beware.*" O'Carroll made no reply; he had already caught a view of the group within the dwelling, and the excess of his emotion palsied every mental and corporeal energy, and in a kind of amazed stupor, he remained silently gazing through the narrow window.

The scene which presented itself, was indeed one of peculiar interest; and the first object which met his view, confirmed the truth of the stranger's insinuations.

On a low bed in one corner of the apartment, was extended a figure, in whose emaciated and deathlike countenance, O'Carroll recognised the features of the once gay and handsome Mr. Spencer. A grave and melancholy female, somewhat advanced in life, was chafing his hands and temples; while Grahame bent over him, wiped the cold dew from his forehead, and seemed to whisper words of consolation in his ear; for the eyes of the sufferer were often raised, with a look of transient brightness to his face, from whence they strayed, with an expression of fond and melancholy tenderness, to a female figure which knelt beside him, her face buried in her hands and her whole frame convulsed with the most powerful emotion. One glance at this slight and delicate form, was sufficient to identify it with the image which O'Carroll's affection had consecrated and enshrined within his inmost heart; and though the features, whose loveliness was fondly remembered were now hidden from his passionate gaze, there were still visible unnumbered charms, over which his eyes wandered with eager and unsated delight. The white and beautifully rounded arms on which her head reposed could be only Marion's, and the bright hair, which, escaped from all restraint, now fell in rich and graceful profusion over her neck and shoulders, was the same which he had so often admired, a single tress of which he still preserved with as fond and zealous care, as that with which a devotee would cherish a relic of his patron saint.

O'Carroll could not again behold the woman he so passionately loved, even under circumstances of the most suspicious nature, without yielding up his whole soul to the influence of those delicious emotions awakened by her presence. But the spell was of short duration. Mr. Spencer stretched his feeble hand towards his daughter, and seemed to address her; for she raised her tearful countenance towards him, and its expression

of grief and melancholy pierced O'Carroll's heart with anguish ; though the pang which her sorrow caused him was trivial, in comparison to that which agonized him, when he saw Grahame fall on his knees beside her, and press her passive hand in his, while Mr. Spencer looked upon them with a smile ; and observing by the motion of his lips that he was addressing them, O'Carroll felt assured he was pronouncing his blessing on their union. Marion leaned upon the shoulder of Grahame, and wept ; and when her father finished speaking, and sunk back exhausted on his pillow, instead of rising to assist him, she remained motionless on Grahame's arm. He turned towards her, and as he raised her in his arms, O'Carroll perceived that she had fainted. Her marble features, closed eyes, and long dishevelled hair, gave to her so deathlike an appearance that O'Carroll, though he had endured in silence the tortures of jealous love, could not sustain the horrible idea suggested by her pale and inanimate form. His fortitude forsook him ; and with a sudden bound he started on his feet. The violence of the act precipitated a loose stone from the rocky platform, which rolling down the side of the rock, struck the wall of the cottage with a force so great that O'Carroll thought it must inevitably occasion their discovery. But the instant in which the stone commenced its downward progress, the man, who had hitherto remained inactive beside O'Carroll, caught his arm and muttering a deep oath, drew him precipitately back to where a thick growth of cedars offered them a place of concealment. In the midst of their harsh and prickly branches, the man crouched like one accustomed to conceal himself at a moment's warning, and whispered O'Carroll to do the same ; who, however, found more difficulty in accommodating himself to so uncomfortable a situation. He wished also to know if the noise had occasioned any disturbance in the cottage, and he persisted in retaining an upright posture, which enabled him to keep his eye fixed upon the small casement, from which he had so hastily retreated. In a few moments he perceived it cautiously open, and first the face

of Ohmeina, then that of Grahame appeared; but they were shortly withdrawn and the window closed again; and as every thing appeared quiet during an interval of fifteen minutes in which they remained in their place of concealment, the man at O'Carroll's earnest entreaty, permitted him to return to the window, on condition that he would observe more circumspection.

He again resumed his recumbent posture, and nerved himself to behold Marion in the arms of Grahame, without emotion. But he was spared this anguish, Grahame was no longer there, and Marion, pale and sad, was sitting beside her father, holding his hand in hers, and watching his countenance which was now settled into tranquil sleep. The woman whom he had before seen performing the office of nurse sat opposite to her, and Minoya, squatting on a mat before the fire, was stirring the contents of a small kettle, into which Ohmeina occasionally threw a root or an herb, which he selected from various bundles that covered a table beside which he sat. Silence seemed to prevail throughout the apartment; but Marion was the only individual who long attracted the observation of O'Carroll. With melancholy tenderness he contemplated the dejection of her lovely countenance, and its pale beauty touched him more sensibly than even the glow of health and happiness, which formerly animated it, had done. He gazed till his soul was melted with sorrow and affection, and he longed to pass the slight barrier which divided them, and ask her why she had forsaken him, and where, in this moment of affliction, she could hope to find the sympathy of a heart more fond and true, than his? But he remembered the promise he had given to the stranger, and under the circumstances of that night, he was constrained to abide by it. Yet he would have remained till morning watching the gestures and countenance of Marion, had not his companion whispered him to rise and come away.

"It is folly to remain here longer," said he, as they turned to quit the place; "you find that I have not deceived you, and you have now but one course to pur-

sue. Grahame is a villain, and you have only to lodge a brace of bullets in his heart, and take Marion for your pains, if indeed, you think her worth the trouble of taking."

"But how came she here," asked O'Carroll, "in this miserable abode; her father dying, and herself without a friend?"

"I have not time to explain any thing to you, to-night," said the man; "it is late, and when I have conducted you to the path, we must separate. Another time, perhaps to-morrow night, should we chance to meet, I will explain to you all the mystery."

"To-morrow night!" repeated O'Carroll, "I know not where I shall then be; before that hour arrives Grahame or I shall have terminated our earthly career; so if you have any thing to communicate delay it not, till a period which never may arrive."

"These rebels are not famous marksmen," said the man; "and I have a presentiment, that you will escape without the singing of a hair; only load well, and take good aim; keep a steady hand, and a straight eye, and the villain shall never cock another pistol at you, or any other man."

O'Carroll involuntarily shuddered; and for some minutes walked on in gloomy silence; then again reverting to the subject of Marion's situation, he asked,

"But will you not inform me, to what circumstance Miss Spencer's present situation is owing, and how she came to be under the immediate protection of Colonel Grahame?"

"He took her under his protection, to be sure," replied the man, with a sarcastic sneer; "it can be no very difficult task to decoy a dying man, and a credulous girl, with fair promises; and Grahame, devil as he is, has the tongue of an angel, as you well know, when he chooses to appear like one."

"Curse his hypocrisy!" muttered O'Carroll, and again sunk into silence, which was not interrupted till they regained the path, when the man stopped and said,



"I have performed my promise, Captain O'Carroll ; remember yours ; and if Grahame accepts your challenge, inform me of it by writing ; name the time, and place of meeting, and deposit your note in the hollow trunk of this oak tree, where I will look for it to-morrow. Do you grant my request ?"

"Tell me first, why you make one so singular ?" asked O'Carroll.

"It matters not," he replied ; "I have awakened you from the delusion in which you were slumbering, and you owe me, at least, this trifling favor. Grant it, or I may do you more injury, than I have yet done service."

"I care nothing for your threats," said O'Carroll ; "but as I have no objection to your knowing as much of the affair as you please, I will humor your fancy, and deposit the note where you direct."

"Farewell, then ; and success attend you," said the stranger ; and turning away, he disappeared in the thicket. Glad to be rid of so disagreeable a companion, O'Carroll walked on, with the light and rapid step of one who feels that he is suddenly relieved of a burden, which had long been cumbersome and oppressive.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Your words have took such pains, as if they labored  
 To bring manslaughter into form, set quarrelling  
 Upon the head of valor; which, indeed,  
 Is valor misbegot, and came into the world,  
 When sects and factions were but newly born;  
 He's truly valiant that can wisely suffer  
 The worst that man can breathe; and make his wrongs  
 His outsides; wear them, like his raiment, carelessly;  
 And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,  
 To bring it into danger."

*Shakespeare.*

As O'Carroll approached the house, a horseman rode from it, whom he instantly recognised as Colonel Grahame; and with every hostile passion excited against him, his first impulse was to follow, and upbraid him for his perfidy. He accordingly, took several hasty strides down the avenue; but he was soon outstripped by the fleetness of Grahame's steed; and finding the attempt to overtake him vain, he returned, vexed and disappointed, towards the house. Before he reached it, however, he met William, who having stopped to adjust his girths, was now hastening to overtake his master. O'Carroll, in no very gentle tone, commanded him to stop; and though the man obeyed, he ventured to say, the Colonel had directed him, on no account to linger behind.

"Do as I bid you," exclaimed O'Carroll, in an imperious tone, "and I will excuse you to your master."

He then left him, and hastening to own room, wrote a brief challenge to the Colonel, which he gave to William, with an injunction to deliver it speedily and carefully to his master; and was re-crossing the hall on his way to the parlor, when he met Catherine, repairing to her father, who for several days, had been confined by indisposition to his apartment.

"You have had a long walk to-night," Captain O'Carroll," said Catherine, stopping abruptly when she saw him; "there have been many inquiries after you, and Captain Talbot is quite vexed at your *penchant* for solitary rambles."

"Is Talbot here?" said O'Carroll, quickly; "how fortunate," he added, and was turning towards the parlor, when Catherine, struck by the disorder of his looks and manner, hastily exclaimed,

"What has befallen you, O'Carroll? all, I am sure, is not well."

"All *will* be well to-morrow, Catherine," returned O'Carroll, wildly.

"What is it you mean?" said Catherine, with increased uneasiness;" and with whom have you quarrelled to-night?"

"With no one to-night," he replied, in a calmer accent; "but to-morrow I have a deadly account to settle. Catherine, Grahame is a villain, unworthy of your regard, and destitute of every virtue which we have foolishly ascribed to him."

Catherine grew pale, and remained silent for a moment; but regaining her habitual self-possession, she was about to speak, when Talbot, hearing voices in the hall, came out to learn if the Captain had returned. The gay salutation which trembled on his lips, was checked by the first glance at O'Carroll's inflamed and agitated countenance; and before he could inquire the cause of his excitement, O'Carroll, extending his hand, said, in a hurried tone,

"I was never more rejoiced to see you, Talbot, in my life; I have a favor to ask, which I know you will not deny me."

"Certainly not, if it is in my power to grant it," said Talbot.

"Come then with me to my apartment," said O'Carroll, "and we will take time to discuss the affair. And you will excuse me, Miss Courtland," he added, turning to Catherine, "for declining any further explanation at present, though I beg you will feel no uneasiness

on account of the inadvertent intimation, which in a moment of ungovernable feeling I was so foolish as to give."

"I shall certainly not suffer it to distress me," said Catherine, calmly. "I have too much confidence in the excellence of Colonel Grahame's principles, to fear that he will throw away his own life, or deliberately take that of another in a manner so foolish and unjustifiable, let the provocation be what it may. As a sincere and candid friend, Captain O'Carroll, I entreat you to reflect calmly and dispassionately before you take the rash step which you meditate. You have once acknowledged yourself unjust towards Grahame; and whatever incident may have transpired to reawaken your doubts, it would, at least, be the wisest course to let them be confirmed before you proceed to accusation and revenge."

"Miss Courtland, I have had ocular demonstration of their truth," said O'Carroll. "I have seen Marion Spencer; seen her in the arms of Grahame, and do you wish me tamely to brook this indignity?"

Catherine felt the color forsake her cheek; but she resolutely controlled her emotion, as she replied in a voice, which, though at first tremulous, became steady as she proceeded,

"There is,—there must be some mistake, Captain O'Carroll; Grahame, I am persuaded, would not intentionally injure you. But supposing him to be so base, and to have injured you so deeply as you imagine, would you not endure it like a man of principle and courage? Forgive, as you would be forgiven, is a precept which should govern every heart; and the arm of the duellist would be often rendered nerveless did he suffer its truth and importance to influence him in the moment of angry excitement."

"With your sex," said O'Carroll, "endurance is a virtue, and you shudder at the daring which induces us to risk life in the defence of honor. But I cannot see mine insulted without seeking to avenge it in the mode prescribed by men of spirit and of courage."

"If in our sex endurance is a virtue, it is a still nobler one in yours," returned Catherine; "since it argues a more exalted degree of fortitude, than with open violence to resent and revenge an injury. There is nothing noble in yielding to the impulse of passion; it is infinitely beneath the courage and the dignity of reasoning, intelligent, christianized man."

"We cannot feel or think alike on the subject of duelling, Miss Courtland," said O'Carroll; "at least, not till you have received injuries as deep and deadly as those which I will and must revenge. Grahame is a poltroon, as well as a hypocrite, if he refuses to grant me the satisfaction I demand."

"I have only to request," said Catherine, "that the affair may not at present be mentioned to my father, who is too much indisposed to be safely agitated by it. And since you are inaccessible to my arguments, I have only to hope those of Captain Talbot may prove more successful."

Major Courtland's bell rung at this moment, and Catherine, apprehending he was not so well, hastily quitted the gentlemen, and went to her father's apartment.

O'Carroll then led the way to his own room; and Talbot, who had been revolving in his mind how he might prevent the disagreeable affair which threatened to interrupt the harmony of their society, was about to speak, when the Captain, who read his thoughts in his countenance, suddenly prevented him by exclaiming,

"You need not assail me with arguments, Talbot; I assure you they will not weigh a straw with me; for I am resolved, and the eloquence of an angel could not dissuade me from my purpose. Besides, it is too late; the challenge is given, and if accepted, I cannot in honor retract."

"But what, in the name of wonder," asked Talbot, "is the cause of this sudden frenzy? where have you been? whom have you seen? and what did you mean by saying that you had seen Marion Spencer in the arms of Grahame?"

"I spoke only the truth," returned O'Carroll; and agitated by the remembrance of the scene which he had witnessed in the cottage, he walked for a few minutes in silence through the apartment. Then reseating himself, he detailed with enforced composure all the occurrences of the evening. Talbot listened with interest and surprise. He could form no conjecture relative to the cause of Mr. Spencer's present situation. Neither could he, notwithstanding his petty jealousy of Grahame, believe him capable of such consummate art and baseness, as so completely and deliberately to deceive them. The mysterious person who had conducted O'Carroll to the cottage, evidently with the design of inciting him against Grahame, seemed to Talbot a malicious instigator of mischief, who purposed to make the Captain an instrument of his revenge.

"And when, and where," asked Talbot, after communicating these thoughts to O'Carroll, "have you appointed the place of meeting?"

"At seven, to-morrow morning," returned O'Carroll, "in the little valley below the mulberry grove. Grahame will bring his second, and a surgeon who must serve for both in case of need; and I have to request that you will accompany me."

"Certainly," said Talbot; "though I sincerely hope the quarrel may yet be settled without bloodshed."

"How is that possible?" exclaimed O'Carroll. "Do you suppose any concessions which Grahame can make, will satisfy me, or atone for the injuries and insults which he has heaped upon me."

"I think there *may* be some misunderstanding, which a *dénouement* would elucidate," said Talbot. "You are well aware that I have no reason to plead the cause of Grahame; but I will not suffer wounded pride to make me unjust; and though I have sometimes suspected him of a little amour with the fair owner of the gold chain which you ravished from poor Victor's neck; yet I acknowledge that the Colonel's uniform conduct and the pure and noble sentiments which he habitually, and with apparent sincerity, expresses, have induced me

to believe that the entanglement, if such there is, must be one of necessity rather than dishonor."

"A speech worthy of Catherine Courtland's candor," said O'Carroll, with a petulant air; "though I do not understand what you mean by an entanglement of necessity! I can conceive of no necessity which should compel Grahame to conceal from me all knowledge of Marion Spencer's existence and abode, and induce him with such barefaced falsehood, to deny the proofs which accident threw into my hands, of his clandestine intercourse and connexion with her."

"Appearances are certainly against him," said Talbot; "but we can decide more correctly when he has answered your challenge. In the mean time, do you intend to write to Marion, or take any measures with regard to her?"

"I intend to see her, Talbot," said O'Carroll, "and I wish you to accompany me to the cottage before the hour appointed for the meeting shall arrive."

"But should we not wait till we receive Grahame's answer before we leave home?" asked Talbot.

"I will order Ronald to stay till it arrives," said O'Carroll; "and if we set out at an early hour we shall be back, and on the spot at the specified time. I will myself awaken you, and hope we may get off without disturbing Major Courtland and the ladies, for whose sakes I wish the affair might terminate more happily than I fear it will. Good night, Talbot; it is late, and you require sleep. I have some letters to write, that will occupy me most of the night, and which I shall entrust to your care. I have also some slight favors to request of you, which I will mention in writing; and now, my dear fellow, again good night."

"I have no wish to sleep," returned Talbot; "the morning will soon dawn, and the hours till then are best passed together."

"No, I cannot consent to it," said O'Carroll; "you will find me an unentertaining companion, and we shall have time enough during our walk to say all that we wish."

Talbot yielded with reluctance, and retired to his own apartment; but his mind was too much occupied by the adventures of O'Carroll, and the too probable events of the morrow, to permit the enjoyment of sleep. Anxious for the safety of his friend and the comfort of Major Courtland and his family, he could not but indulge the hope, that Grahame would offer such an explanation as should reconcile all differences before the affair had proceeded to extremity. But if the Colonel was unable to do that, and proved himself as culpable as he appeared, much as Talbot dreaded the event for O'Carroll, he felt that he could not by a single word seek to dissuade him from his purpose of fighting.

He, in common with most military men, had imbibed erroneous opinions of honor, and imagined that every petty quarrel must be settled by the sword; an absurd relic of Gothic barbarism, which, to the disgrace of christianized man, still continues to be countenanced and practised in the most refined and polished nations; though, it is believed, by individuals only, who, if not destitute, are at least regardless of religious principle and moral feeling. But even among military men there are those who possess a courage far nobler than this rash and brutal daring; a courage which enables them to control the violence and irregularity of anger, and informs them, that, difficult as the task may be, it is easier and safer to forbear and even forgive, than themselves to rush, or madly to send an offending brother with every malignant passion active in his heart, into the presence of an insulted God.

The dawn had scarcely appeared when Talbot rose from his sleepless couch, and proceeded gently to O'Carroll's apartment. He knocked cautiously, and the door was opened by the Captain, whose pale countenance and disordered dress, evinced that he had not even attempted to seek repose. His pistols were lying on the table, among papers and letters, which he was now in the act of sealing. He finished hastily, and throwing them with the loose papers into his writing desk, gave the key to Talbot, with a request, that, should the com-



bat prove fatal to him, he would burn all the contents of the desk, excepting the letters, which he wished him to deliver according to their directions. He then adjusted his dress, placed the pistols in his belt, and proposed to Talbot that they should commence their walk.

It was yet very early ; but, desirous to go and return as soon as possible, they thought no time was to be lost, and quitted the house as silently as possible. They had crossed the piazza; and were turning to enter the garden, when the appearance of Grahame's servant arrested their progress. He delivered a letter to O'Carroll, and without speaking, rode instantly away. The Captain hastily broke the seal ; but at the first glance of its contents, he changed color, and his complexion continued rapidly to vary till he had finished reading.

"Cursed hypocrite !" he exclaimed, as he threw the letter into Talbot's hand. "The false villain dares refuse my challenge, and insults me still farther by an absurd affectation of ignorance. But he shall learn the cause of my resentment in terms too explicit to be misunderstood, and shall give me the satisfaction I demand in defiance of his pretended abhorrence of a custom which has received the sanction of honorable men, in all ages of the world."

O'Carroll in a frenzy of passion, walked rapidly to and fro, while Talbot, not daring to expostulate with him in the first moments of his new excitement, only proposed that they should retire into the garden, where they would be safe from observation.

They accordingly resorted thither ; and while O'Carroll, with hasty and agitated steps, continued to traverse a gloomy alley, Talbot threw himself upon a seat in the summer-house, and read with no little surprise, the letter which had occasioned so much disturbance in his friend. Its contents were as follows,

"To Phillip O'Carroll, Esq. Captain in H. B. M.  
— regiment of foot,"

"SIR,

"I cannot express to you the surprise, with which I read your brief and hasty note received last evening, by

my servant. I know not how I have been so unfortunate as again to provoke your resentment, neither can I imagine, on what grounds you accuse me of artifice and dissimulation; nor is my curiosity greatly excited to learn. The recent explanation which has passed between us, I had hoped, might forbid a recurrence of suspicions on your part, that I am capable of deceiving or betraying the confidence of my friends.

"I have quietly pursued the tenor of my way, without interfering in your interests, and I feel myself free from all responsibility to one, who wilfully misconstrues my conduct, and views all my words and actions with the jaundiced eye of jealousy.

"You must permit me, Captain O'Carroll, to decline your challenge. If I have injured you, I am ready to make any reparation consistent with my principles; but I cannot fight you. I am no duellist; and though you may esteem it a vulgar prejudice, I felicitate myself, that I was early taught to regard the practice with deep and utter abhorrence. Neither your wrongs nor mine, would be redressed by the death of the offender; and from my soul I pity the madman, who, in a moment of ungovernable passion, destroys the life of an unfortunate fellow-creature, and plants in his own heart a thorn of poignant regret, which shall pierce him with anguish, through the remainder of a wretched life!

"I girded on my sword to serve my country; and I will not tarnish the weapon dedicated to her cause, nor sully the honor of a soldier by engaging in a private broil. I would speak of the friendship which has united us, but for the mortifying conviction, that your feelings were but the evanescent impressions of the moment, which have ever yielded to the jealous suggestions of a disordered mind, and made me the constant sport of your passion; the object of continual accusation and invective. But I freely forgive your injustice, and fervently hope that time and experience may bestow on you that stability of character and feeling, which is alone wanting to render you happy, and give security to the permanence of your friendships.

"Wishing you all happiness, sir, and a friend worthy and able to retain your confidence and affection, permit me still to subscribe myself your sincere and obliged friend,

CHARLES GRAHAME."

The tone of feeling which pervaded this letter, and the unaffected candor and dignity with which it was expressed, inspired Talbot with the belief of Grahame's perfect integrity; and he ventured to impart his opinion to O'Carroll. But he would not admit the possibility of the Colonel's innocence; and anxious to be off, before the family had arisen, he urged Talbot to hasten from the garden and proceed with him to the cottage.

"I will stake my life," he said, "that Grahame is there, or his servant would not have been out thus early; and if he persists in refusing me a fair and honorable combat, I will fight him in despite of himself."

Talbot hazarded no reply, and they passed in silence through the gate. Their walk was without incident; and both absorbed in unpleasant meditation, they seldom in the course of it, addressed each other. They crossed the brook, and passing through the little damp valley, where the path bore the appearance of being frequently trodden, advanced with extreme caution towards the cottage, which, notwithstanding his recent visit, O'Carroll would have had some difficulty in finding, but for the blue smoke which curled in the clear air of the morning above the tall forest trees, which embosomed the humble dwelling.

Leaving Talbot concealed in a group of firs, O'Carroll advanced to reconnoitre, and endeavor to judge from appearances in what manner it was best to make himself known to Marion. But he could decide from nothing that he saw around the cottage. No creature was visible, and the deep unbroken silence of the place led him to suppose that the inmates of the dwelling were still buried in sleep. Emboldened by this idea, O'Carroll stepped forward to take a nearer view, when suddenly the door was opened, and the Indian Ohmeina came

out and walked rapidly away, passing so near O'Carroll who concealed himself behind the trunk of a large tree, that he could easily have grasped his garments. He had scarcely disappeared from view, when the cottage door again flew open, and O'Carroll's blood boiled in his veins, as he beheld Colonel Grahame, with Marion Spencer leaning on his arm, come out and walk towards a little path which ran along the foot of the rock.

She seemed to rest upon him with an air of confidence and affection, and O'Carroll thought her neither inattentive nor indifferent to his words, while he stooped towards her and seemed to address her with tenderness.

Regardless of the alarm which his sudden appearance might occasion Marion, and of the inhumanity of disturbing her, in a moment of affliction; regardless of every thing, in fact, save the suggestions of rage and jealousy, O'Carroll rushed from the place of his concealment, and advanced precipitately to the path along which they were walking. His countenance was inflamed with passion, and springing directly before Grahame, without daring to glance at Marion, he exclaimed in a voice, nearly inarticulate with rage,

"Wretch, cowardly and base! is this your boasted honor? this the courage and the principle, which prompted you to refuse a fair and manly challenge; but does not prevent your stooping to the meanest arts of deception and hypocrisy."

He was proceeding with the same violence of gesture and expression, when a shriek from Marion interrupted him; and but for the supporting arm of Grahame, she would have fallen to the ground. He turned to O'Carroll as he raised her, and said, with a look and an accent of severe reproach,

"Selfish and unfeeling man! to pursue me with your invectives, even to the abode of wretchedness and death! Leave me! depart from this place, nor violate with your ungovernable passions, this miserable asylum of the afflicted and unfortunate."

"I will not depart," exclaimed O'Carroll; "neither your threats nor your reproaches have power to drive me away: wherever you go, there I am resolved to follow you."

"To what purpose, sir, is this declaration made?" demanded Grahame haughtily; "for it is impossible that you can intend to adhere to it."

"I shall most resolutely adhere to it," returned O'Carroll; "nor will I quit you till you give me the satisfaction I demand."

"As a gentleman, as a soldier, as a man of honor and truth, I forbid your following me," said Grahame.—"Since you persist in your absurd demand, remain here, and when I have conveyed this lady to the house, I will return to you."

"In consideration of the lady's situation," said O'Carroll, "I yield to your request, though if your return be long delayed, I may be induced to violate my promise, and come to assist you in the pleasant task of recovering your fair charge."

Grahame regarded him a moment in stern displeasure; then raising the still insensible Marion in his arms, walked hastily towards the house. O'Carroll, too angry even for the momentary admission of tender feelings, and almost persuaded that she had intentionally deserted and deceived him, looked upon her lifeless form in gloomy silence, ashamed even to betray an emotion of compassion towards her in the presence of him, who, he thought, was secretly triumphing in his wretchedness. But the instant Grahame turned to leave him, the relentings of love melted his heart, and in an agony of tender sorrow, he stood gazing after her, when Talbot, who, in his place of concealment, had overheard the conversation and witnessed the scene, abruptly joined him.

"I fear you have been hasty," said he: "there must be some misunderstanding; for Grahame's countenance and manner assure me there is no intentional deception."

"And are you too, imposed upon by the fair seeming of this man?" asked O'Carroll impatiently. "Did no other proof condemn him, the sudden swoon of Miss Spencer is a sufficient evidence of guilt."

"It may be of her's" returned Talbot, "and not necessarily involve the truth of Grahame. But the mystery of the affair baffles all conjecture, and I confess I cannot rationally account for a single circumstance."

"I see no mystery," said O'Carroll; "I have only been the dupe of a villain, and these good weapons shall repay the injury."

"But Grahame will not fight," said Talbot; "and I know not any other mode of revenge which you can adopt, unless you pay him in his own coin, and win back Marion, with as much art and secrecy as you imagine he has used to deceive you."

"I scorn to imitate so base an example," said O'Carroll; "and as for Marion, Talbot—passionately as I love her, I would not wish her to be mine, if she has, indeed, been guilty of the perfidy which I suspect."

"If you suspect her of falsehood," said Talbot, "how is it that you cherish such deep resentment against the object, who has superseded you in her affection? A perfidious woman is not worthy a sigh of regret."

"It is not because he has won her, but because he has done so by unfair means, that I am irritated against him," said O'Carroll. "If he had candidly acknowledged his designs and his love, I should have wished him happiness, and have seen with calmness, the possession of Marion transferred to him. But to be made the dupe of his hypocrisy, the object of his derision, it is insufferable. With all your equanimity, Talbot, you would not endure it better than myself."

"Perhaps not," said Talbot; "though I should not envy him the possession of a woman, who had already forsaken two lovers, and could be so readily won by a third."

"I will not believe that she has done so," said O'Carroll; "her father, I am persuaded, had much to do in forcing her from me; and also in bestowing her on that

villain Dalkeith, if indeed it be true that she did accept his addresses. We know nothing of her present circumstances, nor what powerful motive may induce her to yield to Grahame's wishes. I ever thought her greatest fault, a want of stability and firmness. She is so gentle and affectionate, that she is ever guided by others, and is ready to renounce her own happiness, if by so doing she can increase that of her friends."

"It is an amiable disposition," returned Talbot; "but I should wish a little spirit and decision mingled with these soft virtues. And really, O'Carroll, I think even you would weary of perpetual smiles and sweetness, and long for a dash of agreeable acid to vary the insipidity of your wedded life."

"Perhaps so," said O'Carroll, coldly; "but I think I am like to have sufficient acid before I enter the pale of matrimony, to prevent my wishing for it afterward. Though, if indeed Marion Spencer, with all her innocence and purity, has proved herself a vain and fickle coquette, may heaven forbid, that I should ever more garner my happiness in the storehouse of a woman's frail affections."

"Grahame is approaching us," said Talbot; "shall I retire, or remain to witness your interview?"

"Remain, by all means," said O'Carroll; "perhaps I may find service for you, though methinks he steps less haughtily than usual, as if he dreaded to encounter the face of his accuser."

## CHAPTER X.

"There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats ;  
 For I am armed so strong in honesty,  
 That they pass by me, as the idle wind,  
 Which I respect not."

*Shakspeare.*

GRAHAME, however, did not walk with less decision than usual ; though O'Carroll, resolved to believe him guilty, was willing to fancy its consciousness evinced, in every gesture and expression. He advanced with a firm and lofty step ; and after saluting Talbot, said, with a serious and authoritative air,

"What inquiries do you wish to make of me, Captain O'Carroll ? and why is it, that you persecute and insult me with your resentment and unjust suspicions ?"

"Tell me, in the first place," said O'Carroll, fiercely, "why you have hidden the lady, with whom you were just now walking, in this miserable place, apart from all observation and inquiry ?"

"It seems she has not been hidden from your's," returned Grahame, "though her sex and her misfortunes ought to have protected her from insult."

"Insult !" repeated O'Carroll ; "and who, sir, has presumed to insult her ?"

"You, sir," returned Grahame ; "by intruding upon her retirement, and alarming her with the violence of your gestures and expressions. Was it maaly, was it honorable, Captain O'Carroll, to seek me at such a moment for the avowed purpose of a quarrel ; and to violate the gentleness and delicacy of the female character by the most bitter and intemperate language ?"

"Why, then, did you force me to it, by refusing the honorable satisfaction I demanded ?" exclaimed O'Carroll ; "and, with a cowardice which I did not expect from you, decline the fair challenge that I gave ?"



"It would have been greater cowardice in me to accept it," returned Grahame; "since it would have proved me too much afraid of popular opinion to support the principles I profess. I do not fear the name of coward, Captain O'Carroll, conscious, as I am, that I have not merited it. I have never shrunk from my duty, and while my country requires a defender, my sword shall not rest in its scabbard. But it shall not be unsheathed in a private quarrel; the weapon which has aided the cause of liberty, shall never be stained with the blood of the duellist."

"One who is so averse to make reparation for an injury," returned O'Carroll, "should be cautious not to offend. He should be circumspect in word and deed; invade the rights of no man; and hold sacred the claims of friendship."

"And how, sir," asked Grahame, "have I violated these obligations? How have I injured you, and thus bitterly excited your resentment?"

"Is the lady, whom I saw with you, under your protection?" asked O'Carroll, without replying directly to his question.

"She is," returned Grahame; "but before I reply to any farther inquiries, I must be informed by what authority and for what purpose you make them?"

"I must first make one more," said O'Carroll, "and that a direct one. Do you, or do you not expect to marry that lady?"

"And you, sir," said Grahame, "must tell me by what authority you scrutinize my actions and pretend to usurp an inquisitorial influence over me? I may then, perhaps, if satisfied of the justice and purity of your motives, consent to answer your inquiries; but at present, I feel neither disposed nor obliged to render you an account of my conduct or designs."

"I have not the slightest wish," said O'Carroll, "to inquire into your conduct, or to scrutinize your motives, excepting so far as they have a reference to the lady in question."

"I know not whence this interest in one with whom you have no connexion arises," said Grahame. "In one, who I am sure, would feel only surprise to be told, that he who intruded with such unmanly violence upon her retirement, was interesting himself by the most minute and unauthorized inquiries concerning her welfare."

"You have no occasion to add insult to injury, sir," exclaimed the exasperated O'Carroll! "But whatever may be the nature of her feelings towards me, I doubt not I am indebted to you for them; though still my wish for her happiness is too sincere to be destroyed by prejudice or injustice; and I again demand of you, if your views towards this lady are honorable, or if she too is destined to become the dupe of your pretended sympathy and compassion?"

"Your language is incomprehensible to me, Captain O'Carroll," returned Grahame, coloring with indignation; "nor can I imagine from what part of my conduct you feel yourself authorized to imply an accusation so unjust to my principles, and so degrading to my character. A libertine and a duellist are equally abhorrent to me; and while I profess to hate the vices of the one, I might with justice be accused of cowardice and insincerity, were I to practice those of the other. I admire the purity and delicacy of the female character too much to degrade it; and he who can deliberately betray the love or abuse the confidence reposed in him, even by the simplest individual of this dependent sex, is unworthy the regard of any, and destitute of every noble and truly virtuous feeling."

Talbot, who had remained a silent, but not an inattentive auditor, could not but admire the glow of virtuous feeling which lighted up the fine countenance of Grahame, as he pronounced these words. Every moment he felt the more strongly inclined to censure the impetuosity of O'Carroll, and the more firmly persuaded that the dignified forbearance and self-possession with which Grahame endured his insulting accusations, could only be the result of conscious integrity, which rendered him

superior to the taunts of angry suspicion and injustice. But no such conviction entered the mind of O'Carroll. He had wrought himself into a paroxysm of jealous rage, which the calmness of Grahame seemed rather to increase than moderate; and still in the same tone of haughty defiance, he replied,

"I have learned from experience the true value of professions, sir; and have found that the most hollow and deceitful are usually garnished with choice words and fine phrases. But the only inference which I can draw from yours, is, that the *honorable* protection you are now affording to the lady in question, is to terminate in matrimony; and, if so, methinks I can discern some slight inconsistency of conduct unworthy of one who places his standard of honor so high. For this lady, doubtless, your intention will be most happy; but is there not another, Colonel Grahame, whose hopes may all be blasted by it, whose affections you have sought to win, and now cast from you like a worthless weed!"

"Of what folly, vice, and crime, do you not think me capable, sir?" asked Grahame. "You have accused me of those which are most foul and despicable; and though with a forbearance which you did not deserve, I have endeavoured to convince you of my integrity, you still persist in imputations alike unjust and unprovoked."

"*Are* they unjust, Colonel Grahame?" said O'Carroll; "and have you not sought to win the affections of Miss Courtland? If she bestowed them voluntarily, you should have preserved the humane consistency of your character by informing her of this fair innamorata, who was to prove so formidable an obstacle to her budding hopes."

Grahame's eye kindled with anger as he replied,

"I have endured the insults and indignities with which you have been pleased to assail me, Captain O'Carroll, because I saw that every faculty of your mind was enslaved by passion, and I deemed it beneath the dignity of a rational being to feel or express anger at the idle fantasies of a madman. But, sir, not even a madman shall mention the name of Miss Courtland with

disrespect in my presence ; and if she is again made the theme of your sarcastic remark, I shall quit you instantly without further conversation."

"If I uttered any sarcastic remark, sir," returned O'Carroll, "it was intended to apply to you, and not to Miss Courtland, who is an object of my most profound respect, and whose happiness is so greatly desired by me, that I have reproached you perhaps at an unseasonable moment, for trifling with her affections when your own were plighted to another."

"You might with justice reproach me had I been guilty of such baseness," said Grahame. "I would not wantonly trifle with the affections of any one ; and I must be low indeed in your estimation, or you would not suppose me capable of sporting with the feelings of a mind so pure, so exalted, so free from every taint of vanity or weakness. And now, sir, will you be so good as to inform me, for which of the crimes that you have been pleased to lay to my charge, you thought fit to honor me with the fierce challenge which I received last evening?"

"You have no cause to inquire of me," returned O'Carroll, "since your own conscience must inform you that no man of spirit would brook the falsehood and duplicity which you have practised upon me ; and I again declare to you, that if you persist in refusing to fight, you have neither the honor of a gentleman, nor the courage of a soldier."

"I would not choose to be judged by the criterion of a duellist," returned Grahame, "though I prefer rather to incur your unjust and uncandid imputation, than seek to avoid it by the violation of tried and established principles. But still, Captain O'Carroll, I declare myself ignorant of the grounds of your resentment. You accuse me of falsehood and duplicity ; but you adduce no proofs in support of your charge ; nor have you mentioned the circumstances in which I have thought it expedient to employ such unworthy agency."

"And do you wish me to detail the *minutiae* of your injurious conduct, in order to convince you that I am

not ignorant of it?" exclaimed O'Carroll, indignantly. "You know that you have stolen into the affections of the woman dearest to me in life; and that you have artfully hidden from me all knowledge of her, that you might with more security promote your own designs! And is there no duplicity, no treachery in this?"

"There would be both duplicity and meanness in it, had I done so," returned Grahame. "But still, I persist in declaring that such has not been my conduct, and that I know not to whom you allude. Your charge is incomprehensible to me; for though it seems to intimate a knowledge of the lady with whom you saw me walking, I cannot conceive of your possessing this knowledge; or, if indeed you do, it is and ever has been unknown to me."

O'Carroll was about to reply with violence, when Talbot, no longer doubting the existence of a mistake, which gave rise to the difficulty, hastily interposed.

"Captain O'Carroll," he said, "be less passionate, or you will deeply regret it. There is some mistake with regard to the lady in question, which you had better seek to explain, or, at least, hear explained before you utter any further accusation."

"What mistake can possibly exist?" exclaimed O'Carroll; "Colonel Grahame has long been acquainted with my passion for Miss Spencer, and has repeatedly heard me express a wish to learn the place of her present abode. And yet it is known to him; he visits her at all hours; obtains her affections; and even now she fainted in his arms at sight of the lover she had injured."

Doubt and astonishment filled the mind and marked the countenance of Grahame; but, after a momentary pause, he said,

"The lady whom you call Miss Spencer, Captain O'Carroll, was never known to me by that name. But if the one which she wears is assumed, and she is in reality the lost object of your affections, all mystery is explained; and the cause of your resentment becomes at once intelligible."

"The lady whom I saw with you in this path," returned O'Carroll, "was certainly no other than Miss Spencer, whom I imagined you knew as such, and sought purposely to conceal from my knowledge. An artifice, of which, base as it appears, I was compelled by circumstances to believe you guilty."

"You knew me far too well, Captain O'Carroll, to judge of me so harshly," returned Grahame. "This lady has ever been known to me only as Miss Stanley; and the incidents which threw her father and herself under my protection were of such a nature as to render secrecy concerning them an act alike of honor and humanity."

Talbot looked at O'Carroll with an expression which seemed to say, "You find you have been too precipitate;" but the Captain's suspicions were not yet banished, and although entirely ignorant of the causes which had placed Miss Spencer under the protection of Grahame, he thought it impossible, that, dependent as she seemed to be upon him, he could long have remained uninformed of her real name, or of the events which had formerly connected her with himself. With a brow still clouded, though less threatening, he turned to Grahame, saying,

"And is it possible that you have never known her true name, nor ever, during your intercourse with her, heard her mention mine, or allude to the circumstances of my connexion with her?"

"Your name, Captain O'Carroll, I have never heard her mention; nor did I imagine that she knew of your existence," said Grahame. "I have sometimes, it is true, suspected that her name was an assumed one; but the peculiar delicacy of their situation prevented my intimating such a suspicion. I can say no more, sir, to convince you of the purity of my conduct and intentions. If you still persist in doubting, you are at liberty to appeal to Miss Spencer, if such be her name; and she will corroborate the truth of all that I have asserted."

"I am compelled to believe you, Colonel Grahame," returned O'Carroll; "and though your information had

been still more strange and incredible, this voluntary overture, for an interview with Miss Spencer, would forbid me longer to doubt you. I wish to see her only as a friend, nor would I put my feeble claims in competition with yours.

"I have no claims upon Miss Spencer, Sir," said Grahame, "I am interested in her, as a lovely and unfortunate woman; as one whose happiness, both my own inclinations and the dictates of humanity prompt me to promote. But I shall oppose no obstacle to your wishes, provided Miss Spencer does not fear to entrust her welfare with one, whose suspicions are so readily excited, and who so willingly yields the reins of reason to the mad guidance of passion."

O'Carroll's susceptible heart could not withstand the manly and generous frankness of Grahame, and while a glow of shame and repentance crimsoned his ingenuous features, he held his hand towards the Colonel, and said,

"I do not deserve your forgiveness, Colonel Grahame; I acknowledge that I have justly forfeited your friendship, and am unworthy of the candor and forbearance, which you have exercised towards me. I will not say it shall be the last time I offend, because that is a resolution which I am perpetually breaking; but I *will* say, that nothing shall ever again induce me to doubt the honor which I believe is unimpeachable."

"I freely forgive you, O'Carroll," said the Colonel, cordially receiving his offered hand. "But in justice to yourself, I entreat you will strive to be less apt to take offence, and slower to suspect the friendship which never has betrayed you."

"I will; I promise it solemnly;" said O'Carroll; "but you know not what a host of evidence arose to prove you guilty; nor with what devilish art I was assailed, by that incarnate fiend who haunts the forest, and who, by all the arguments which he could invent, sought to convince me of your guilt, and instigate me to revenge the injury."

"You ought to have known the man before you listened to his evil counsel," said Grahame. "You had surely slight cause for confidence in one, who refused to disclose his person, and avowed himself actuated exclusively by motives of hatred and revenge."

"I had indeed, no right to repose the least faith in him," returned O'Carroll; "and I did not, when I listened to the cool suggestions of reason. But his taunts and insinuations awakened my jealousy, and inflamed my anger. He was so familiar with the history, and spoke with such certainty of Miss Spencer, that I vainly attempted to disregard him, and I yielded myself wholly to his guidance."

"But how were you assured," asked Grahame, "that this man was not deceiving you? Had you any reason to place a firmer reliance on his word, than on mine?"

"No; certainly not," returned O'Carroll; "but what he said corresponded so well with certain observations of my own, that I found myself giving involuntary credence to his suggestions; though I refused implicitly to believe them till he gave me ocular demonstration, which I could no longer doubt."

"When, and how did you receive this demonstration?" inquired Grahame, in surprise.

"I blush," returned O'Carroll, "to speak of the unworthy subterfuge, to which I was last night driven by the frenzy of jealous passion. But you, Colonel Grahame, who have forgiven so much, may, perhaps, also pardon this last breach of honor, to which I was urged by the vehemence of feelings never under proper control."

He then recounted all that had passed between himself and the stranger, on the preceding evening. He made no comments as he proceeded in his narrative; but the extreme emotion with which he spoke of Miss Spencer, evinced such depth of feeling, and devotion of attachment, that it touched the compassion of Grahame, and pleaded O'Carroll's apology for an act, which the Colonel's high sense of honor would have forbidden his committing, under any circumstances whatever.



"Appearances were certainly against me," he said, as O'Carroll finished his relation; "but they are often deceptive, and were peculiarly so in this instance. I have certainly never known the lady, whom you call Miss Spencer, under any other name than that of Stanley. Her father entered the American service about two years since, as a volunteer; and the bravery which he displayed, soon after, in an engagement with the enemy, procured him a Captain's commission. His courage and talents as an officer, would have insured him rapid promotion, but for the suggestions of a personal enemy, who maliciously excited a suspicion of his being false to the American cause, and actually in the employment of the British. A supposition so absurd, considering the zeal and active courage which he had manifested in our service, was yet credited by many, and he was placed under arrest. He however contrived to escape, and accident threw him into my power; but convinced of his innocence, I refused to betray him; and taking advantage of a current report, that he had embarked for Ireland, I hastened his departure to this retired spot, where he has since remained under my immediate protection; and till now, safe from all observation or inquiry. But we have not time at present, Captain O'Carroll, to enter into particulars. If you please, I will meet you at Major Courtland's this evening, and give you the whole detail of my connexion with Mr. Spencer and his daughter. Or perhaps, you may choose to learn the history of Marion from herself; and I have neither authority nor inclination to oppose the interview, if it is her pleasure to grant it."

O'Carroll's countenance glowed with hope and pleasure; but doubt and anxiety clouded its bright expression, as he inquired if Mr. Spencer was still living.

"He is," returned Grahame, "and may, I think, survive several days; though when I left him last evening, I scarcely expected to find him alive this morning. It is the nature of his fatal disorder constantly to assume new forms, which beguile him, and disappoint even the observation and experience of his friends. Thus

poor Marion is continually agitated by vain hopes and agonizing fears. Though persuaded, that her father cannot recover, she will not familiarize herself to the idea of his death, and when it shall take place, I dread the effect it may produce upon her health and mind."

O'Carroll sighed, and remained silent; and Colonel Grahame, after a momentary pause, continued:

"Finding Mr. Spencer greatly revived this morning, but Marion dejected and in tears, I prevailed on her to resign her place by her father's bedside, to the attendant, and led her from the melancholy apartment of disease and death, hoping that the cheerful view of nature, and the freshness of the morning air might invigorate and refresh her. I was striving to console and animate her, when your appearance, Captain O'Carroll, interrupted my efforts; though I have slight cause to hope that they would have proved successful. Independently of the grief which her father's illness occasions, and the dejection arising from her unfortunate situation, she cherishes a hidden sorrow, a secret germ of bitterness, which all my solicitude has been unable to discover or destroy. The secret is now revealed to me, and may you, Captain O'Carroll, be the means of restoring peace and happiness to this innocent and unfortunate creature. I will go to her, and I think," he added, with a smile, "I shall not be long in obtaining her consent to see you."

He quitted him as he concluded, and walked hastily towards the cottage. O'Carroll overwhelmed with emotion, stood gazing after him with eyes full of gratitude and admiration. Talbot marked their expression, and said with a smile,

"We will not distrust him again, O'Carroll."

"I shall be a villain if I do," returned the Captain, with vehemence; then taking his friend's arm, he walked slowly along the path, his eyes rivetted upon the door of the cottage, and his heart full of hope and expectation.

Mr. Spencer was sleeping when Grahame re-entered the house; and the nurse was sitting alone beside him.

Marion was in a little apartment which belonged exclusively to her; thither Colonel Grahame, aware that it was no time for the observance of punctilious ceremony, immediately directed his steps

He knocked gently at the door, and, Marion's soft low voice bidding him come in, he raised the latch and entered. She was sitting in an attitude of pensive meditation, her head resting on her hand, her face paler than marble, and her long eyelashes still wet with tears. She did not look up, and for a moment Grahame observed her in silence; but when he essayed to speak, she started from her seat; a deep blush suffused her countenance, and she said, in an embarrassed tone,

"Is it you Colonel Grahame? I thought it had been Minoya!"

"And am I less welcome than Minoya, Marion?" asked Grahame, gently. "You know" he added, "I have been admitted to this little apartment before, and I come now to inquire if you are quite recovered, for I would not go till I see you as well as usual."

"Thank you," she replied, in a hurried tone; "I am well, quite well; so go, do not let me be the cause of taining you."

But Grahame saw that she could with difficulty restrain her tears; and deeply compassionating her feelings, he took her hand, and leading her gently to a seat, placed himself beside her. Marion seemed struggling for composure, and Grahame during the momentary silence which prevailed, was revolving in what manner to speak upon the delicate subject of O'Carroll's visit. At length, he ventured to say,

"I have been conversing with a friend of yours, Miss Stanley, who expresses great solicitude for your happiness, and an earnest desire to see you. I come to intercede for him, and he waits only to receive that permission, which he authorized me to say, would make him the happiest and most grateful of men."

Marion made an effort to reply, but her voice failed; and bursting into tears, she covered her face with her hand, and remained silent. Grahame was distressed

by this extreme emotion, and anxious to sooth her feelings, he said with affectionate solicitude,

"My dear Marion, I cannot see you thus unhappy, without excessive pain. I am far from urging you to see Captain O'Carroll, if it is repugnant to your wishes."

"And was it indeed, Captain O'Carroll, whom I saw?" asked Marion, raising her tearful eyes, with a look of earnest inquiry, to his face.

"It was indeed he," returned Grahame. "Why, did you doubt it, Marion?"

"I thought it a delusion," she replied; "I knew not how he could be here, and in connexion with you."

"And did you hear him address me?" asked Grahame, fearful that the harshness of his salutation might have been remarked by her.

"I heard nothing," returned Marion; "I saw him, whom I never expected to see more, and I fainted. Since you left me, I have been striving to remember what has past; but it seemed to me nothing but a dream."

"It was not a dream, Marion, but a reality; and may it prove to you a most delightful one. O'Carroll will explain to you all that seems surprising; and since you do not forbid me to conduct him hither, I shall interpret your silence as assent."

She blushed and trembled; but she vainly strove to speak, and Grahame, happy that a gleam of light was at length dawning through the darkness which had gathered early around her youth, quitted the cottage, and conducted the impatient O'Carroll to the door of her apartment.

Then remounting his horse, which had been patiently waiting for his master, in a sunny nook of the rocks, he rode slowly from the place. Talbot walked by his side, and they conversed as they went, upon the singular and interesting events of the morning.

## CHAPTER XI.

He could not speak, he could but hang  
 Enraptured on her look ;  
 And sighs that from his bosom sprang,  
 They proved that joy may have a pang  
 As hard as grief's to brook.

*Miss Milford.*

IN a tumult of hope and eager expectation, O'Carroll approached the residence of Marion Spencer. When he found himself alone in her presence ; when he gazed upon her youthful figure, drooping like a delicate flower, beneath the withering touch of early sorrow ; when he remarked the paleness of that lovely countenance, which he had last seen glowing with health and happiness, he forgot the painful regrets which had so long embittered his existence. The past, with all its corroding disappointments, seemed like the troubled dream of a night, and he remembered only the love which he had bore her ; and was conscious only of the joy of again beholding, and being permitted to address her. As she sat pale, silent, and motionless before him, his emotions spurned control. He saw the woman he adored, depressed by sorrow and misfortune, and with impassioned tenderness he rushed towards her ; he fell on his knees before her, and pressed her passive hand to his lips and heart, with all the fervor of devoted love. They neither of them spoke, but Marion's tears flowed apace, and the sight was like oil thrown upon the fire, to O'Carroll's feelings. Marion observed it, and made a slight effort to withdraw her hand from his ; but aroused by this gesture, O'Carroll held it still closer to his heart, exclaiming, in a tone of mingled tenderness and reproach,

"Marion, my beloved Marion ! do not deny me this happiness, purchased by months and years of suffering !"

The thrilling accents of her lover's voice, subdued the slight remains of fortitude which Marion possessed ;

and sinking into the seat from which she had partly risen; she wept without an effort to restrain her tears. O'Carroll, touched by her emotion, forcibly commanded his own, and said, in a calmer accent,

"I have distressed you, Marion! forgive me; look upon me; nor turn away, as if I were an object to be dreaded."

"Forgive you, Captain O'Carroll!" exclaimed Marion, in a low and tremulous voice, and raising her eyes for a moment to his face. "What have I to forgive? I, who expected only reproaches, yet am greeted with such affectionate and undeserved kindness!"

"I came not to reproach you, Marion," said O'Carroll. "I came to speak to you, or of you, only with gentleness and affection. Tell me only that I am still dear to you, and the past is all forgotten, and the happy future rises in unclouded brightness before me."

"You cannot, ought not to say so," returned Marion, "till every circumstance which rendered me culpable in your eyes is explained; nor can I, till then, expect to be restored to that place in your esteem which I once occupied."

"In my love and my esteem you ever have and ever will occupy the highest place, dear Marion," returned O'Carroll. "My heart tells me, that parental authority, and not your own inclination, prompted you to desert me; and my fondest wishes will be realized, if I can again persuade my lovely Marion to accept the heart which once she did not think unworthy of her, and to bless me with the promise of that love which alone can constitute my happiness."

"You know not what you desire," returned Marion; "nor with whom you would connect yourself. You know not that we are disgraced, exiled, proscribed; without a home, without friends, without a country! destitute, afflicted, and oppressed; compelled even to conceal that name which was once our pride; and dependent on the humanity of strangers for the daily comforts of life. It is with one thus portionless, obscure,

and wretched, that you, the heir of proud and wealthy relatives, seek for an alliance?"

"It is with beauty, innocence, and virtue, that I seek to ally myself," returned O'Carroll, in a tone of feeling which evinced how deeply he was touched by Marion's melancholy picture. "Of this, dear Marion, I am assured, that, though fortune may have made you her sport, and given you to drink her cup of bitterness, it cannot be ascribed to any crime, to any failing even, of yours; and were I a rich and sovereign prince, instead of a poor soldier of fortune, dependent on the will of a testy relative, who may, at last, cut me off with a shilling, I would rather marry Marion Spencer than be the husband of the fairest, and the wealthiest heiress in the three kingdoms."

Marion smiled sadly, and sighed, as she answered,

"I can but be grateful for this generous and constant affection, O'Carroll; and you, who know my heart, may imagine its anguish, when I tell you I am forbidden to return your love; and that, perhaps, I am doing wrong only to see you."

"Is then your father's aversion to me unconquerable?" asked O'Carroll, pale with anger and emotion; "and will he sacrifice his daughter's happiness to an unjust and cruel prejudice?"

"You do him injustice, O'Carroll," returned Marion. "My father wishes my happiness, and he would gladly atone to you for his former unkindnesses. But there are other claims and deeper obligations which his grateful heart is anxious to repay. There is one, to whom we owe every thing; one who has shielded us from insult and ignominy, even at the risk of his own safety; one who has assiduously administered to our comfort, and cheered with his benevolent kindness the gloom of our melancholy solitude; one who has been to my father all that the most devoted son could be; and to me—what do I not owe him? more, far more than I can ever hope to repay."

"Marion!" exclaimed O'Carroll, passionately, "do not madden me by insinuations. Yet tell me, tell me at

once if Grahame has deceived me ; if he possesses your affections, and if your father sanctions his addresses ?”

Marion blushed deeply as she replied,

“ My father certainly wishes the connexion ; but I know not if he has ever conversed with Colonel Grahame on the subject. I know but this ; he assured me that I was beloved by Colonel Grahame, and he wrung from me the promise to become his, should he desire it.”

“ And you promised, Marion,” said O’Carroll ; “ cruel girl ! at the expence of my peace, of all my dearest hopes, you promised to become another’s !”

“ I thought then that I was never more to see you, O’Carroll,” she replied ; “ but had you been present, what could I have done ? Ought I not to sacrifice even my happiness to the wishes of my father’s benefactor and my own ?”

“ No, you ought not, and you shall not !” exclaimed O’Carroll, with impassioned tenderness. “ I cannot resign you, and I conjure you by all our past affection ; by the vows which we have made ; by our future hopes ; by honor, duty, love ; by every thing most dear and sacred,—to renounce this resolution, if you would not make me utterly and hopelessly wretched.”

“ You do wrong to move me thus,” said Marion, in a tone of gentle reproach. “ By awakening remembrances which I have struggled to forget, you render still harder the performance of duties, which, if required, I must fulfil. I repeat to you, O’Carroll, that I owe every thing to Colonel Grahame’s friendship and humanity ; and could you prize a heart insensible to the most binding obligations, or accept a hand purchased at the price of every grateful and generous feeling ?”

O’Carroll traversed the apartment for a few moments in silence, and then with a more composed air, replied,

“ If Colonel Grahame does indeed love you, Marion, and wish for a connexion with you, he is the most generous of men ; since knowing my affection for you, he proposed this interview, and even wished me success in the renewal of my suit. Dear Marion, I am persuaded your father’s hopes have induced him to believe that



Grahame loves you; for besides the cordiality with which he wished me success, I have every reason to believe that his heart is entirely devoted to one, who, I am sure, does not regard him with indifference."

Marion's countenance brightened with a portion of its former gaiety and happiness as she listened to this welcome suggestion; and the delighted O'Carroll gazed with rapture on the dimpling cheeks and laughing blue eyes of his fondly beloved Marion, such as he had known them in the first days of his love.

"Yes, dear Marion," said O'Carroll, after a few brief moments, in which both were too happy and too full of emotion to break the silence,—“we may hope, at last, to taste that cup of felicity which has been so often held to our lips, and cruelly snatched from them before we had power to sip. You, at least, deserve a richer recompense than I have power to give; you, who have endured so much, and with such patient sweetness; you, who with more than manly courage had resolved to sacrifice your fondly cherished hopes and dearest affections, on the the altar of gratitude and filial duty."

"The world, O'Carroll, would not allow me any merit for such a sacrifice," said Marion; "nay, the world would not even permit it to be termed a sacrifice; but would rather stigmatize, and condemn as absurd and romantic, the conduct of a friendless girl, who for the sake of a hopeless and ill-fated passion, should slight the affection of a noble heart, and decline the honorable protection which would shield her from poverty and insult."

"But you, Marion," said O'Carroll, with fervor, "are superior to the cold sneers of a selfish world; you are not guided by its maxims, nor do you fear its taunts; and though you would conceal the generosity of your conduct under the veil of worldly policy and prudence, it is easy to pierce through its folds, and detect the pure, disinterested motives which alone actuated you. Marion, the heart which has once truly loved, can never yield to the influence of selfish passions while one ray of hope continues to animate it."

"But I was scarcely conscious of cherishing a hope that we might meet again," said Marion; "indeed, I hardly dared desire it, after quitting you so abruptly; which, I feared, even your affection, sincere as I thought it to be, could never pardon. To the anguish of separation was added the humiliating conviction, that I must appear weak, trifling, and inconstant in your eyes; and that, ignorant of the motives which actuated me, you would despise and remember me only with contempt. You cannot conceive how miserable this reflection made me. In renouncing you, I acted according to the dictates of conscience; and I could have learned in time to resign myself to the loss of your affection, had I been permitted to explain my conduct, and reconcile you to what I then considered an act of religious duty. Though wounded by the coldness which marked your manners towards the close of our intercourse, I could not persuade myself to believe your affections entirely alienated from me; and violently to break those bonds which had so tenderly united us, and fly without a farewell word, leaving you to believe me the false and fickle creature that I seemed, was a trial hard to be endured,—worse even than the pang of separation, or the bitterness of disappointed hopes and blasted expectations."

"Dearest Marion," said O'Carroll, in an accent of tenderness, "I only am censurable; and I deserve all that I have suffered. I, who cruelly wounded your gentle heart by my coldness and unkind caprice, was unworthy of your love or your consideration. Yet I have mourned for you unceasingly; but never, no, never accused you. For months I sought after you, anxious to atone for my offence, and prevail on you to fulfil your promise to be mine. My endeavours were vain; and though I left Ireland with a wounded heart, still the consolatory hope that I might one day find you free and willing to renew the intercourse of happier hours, has never utterly forsaken me; but has continued to soften the regrets of the past, and to shed a ray of light over the uncertain prospects of the future. And now, dear Marion, inform me of the events which have faded this

lovely cheek, and saddened the gaiety of those laughing eyes, which once sparkled with happiness ; or, if they shone through tears, they were tears only of tenderness and joy."

"The bitter drops of sorrow only, have suffused them since we parted, O'Carroll," she replied. "But you shall know all that has befallen us ; only you must judge my father gently ; if he has erred, it was through the excess of his affection for me ; and I think a heart as kind as yours will forgive the anxiety of a father for the welfare of his only child, although you may yourself have suffered by its indulgence."

"I am far from feeling enmity towards your father, Marion," answered O'Carroll. "For your sake I can endure and suffer every thing in silence ; and, blessed with your love, regard with indifference the contempt or malice of the world."

Marion made no reply, but remained for a few moments with downcast eyes, apparently absorbed by meditation ; then, as if fearful of losing the resolution necessary to the recital which she was about to give, she commenced abruptly, and without farther preface, the narrative of those events which had conspired to reduce her to her present situation. It was often interrupted by O'Carroll, with ejaculations of anger or abhorrence, and with expressions of tender endearment and consolation. His knowledge of Mr. Spencer's early history, and of many circumstances with which our readers are unacquainted, induce us, in order to make them familiar with what Marion did not think it necessary to repeat, as well as to avoid the frequent interruptions of the lovers, to present in our own circumstantial detail, the history of events tending to explain many things which now appear mysterious in our narrative.

We shall, however, reserve this detail to form the subject of a future chapter ; and leaving Captain O'Carroll and his recovered Marion to the indulgence of their hopes, their affections, and their fears, we will return for a short time to Miss Courtland, and describe the scenes in which she is at present interested.

## CHAPTER XII.

"How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false  
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins  
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;  
Who inward searched, have livers white as milk!  
And these assume but valor's excrement,  
To render them undoubted."

*Shakespeare.*

WHEN Catherine on the preceding evening quitted O'Carroll to repair to her father's apartment, firm as she was in the conviction that Colonel Grahame would refuse the Captain's challenge, she felt unusually agitated by the circumstances which O'Carroll had mentioned as the cause of his anger. She could not prevail on herself to doubt the honor of Grahame; yet she was perplexed by the mystery of his conduct, and she dreaded lest the ungovernable feelings of O'Carroll should urge him, in case Grahame denied the satisfaction which he demanded, to revenge himself in some way equally violent and fatal.

Major Courtland, notwithstanding his rigid notions of military honor, was a decided enemy to duelling; and though his principles had never been put to the actual test, he had several times successfully interposed to prevent the commission of the crime by others; and whenever a proper occasion offered, he argued strenuously against so barbarous and sanguinary a practice. Catherine well knew his feelings on the subject, and she thought of entreating him to use his influence in calming the strong passions of O'Carroll; but she feared to agitate him by the relation of what had past, and perhaps effectually disturb that repose which it was essential for him to enjoy.

She therefore, at a late hour, left him by his positive injunction, to the care of Hugh, and retired to her own apartment. Notwithstanding the anxiety of her mind, she could not long resist the gentle influence of sleep;

though her dreams were disturbed, and in imagination she still saw the angry countenance and heard the passionate voice of O'Carroll. She started up the moment she awoke, and hastened from her apartment in the hope of obtaining a short interview with O'Carroll before he should have time to take any decisive step. But she was distressed and disappointed to learn from Hugh, who had received his intelligence from Ronald, that the challenge had been sent and the meeting was to take place at seven. He informed her also, that Captain's Talbot and O'Carroll had gone out very early together, with what design he knew not, though Ronald had heard them speak of walking to a cottage somewhere in the neighbourhood. Catherine instantly conjectured that they had gone to claim an interview with Miss Spencer, whom O'Carroll mentioned having seen, though in the agitation of the moment, she had never inquired where.

Desirous, she scarcely knew why, to speak with O'Carroll; and apprehensive that he would not return to the house before the hour appointed for the meeting, Catherine wrapped her cloak around her, and walked through the garden to the forest path, where she thought it possible she might chance to encounter him. She had proceeded to a considerable distance without meeting him or any other person, and was about to return, hopeless of accomplishing her wish, when a slight rustling of the withered leaves startled her, and she turned quickly round in the expectation of beholding O'Carroll. But a very different object met her view. Close beside the path she saw a man busily engaged in exploring the hollow trunk of a decayed oak, and so absorbed by his employment that her approach had been unheeded by him. Her first impulse was hastily to retreat; but attracted by something in his person that seemed familiar to her, and assured that he did not perceive her, she stopped for a moment to observe him. She thought he must be the mysterious stranger who had so often assailed O'Carroll, and a powerful emotion of interest and curiosity mingled with her feeling of re-

cognition. His features were concealed from her, as he bent his head quite into the aperture of the tree ; but the cloak which usually enveloped his person, was now thrown carelessly over one arm, for the convenience of leaving the other at liberty and free from its encumbering folds. He was habited in the demure garb of a Quaker.

Catherine was naturally fearless ; but after a hasty glance at the person of this desperate man, she recollected her lonely situation ; and alarmed at the danger of being seen by him, was turning to fly, when he suddenly raised his head, and she recognised the well remembered features of Mr. Forrester, whom she had often seen while resident in the family of Richard Hope. Wonder and astonishment arrested her retreating footsteps ; and with an involuntary expression of surprise, she audibly pronounced his name. He started, and appeared extremely disconcerted ; his bronzed features were instantly suffused with crimson ; and impelled by an instinctive wish for concealment, he drew his cloak around him and slouched his broad-brimmed hat over his face, from which while searching the hollow tree he had so far pushed it, as to leave his countenance exposed. But almost immediately pushing it back again, he said, in a tone which seemed to invite compassion.

“ Yes, Miss Courtland, you behold in me that injured and unhappy man ; an exile from my country, yet persecuted and insulted by the people, on whose kindness I had thrown myself for shelter and protection.”

Catherine deeply regretted her imprudence in having so long lingered near this suspicious person as to attract his notice ; and she cast an anxious glance around her to learn if there was any one near, whom, in case of need, she might summon to protect her from insult. But no living creature was visible ; and relying on her fleetness of foot for safety, and resolving to preserve the same goodly distance, which now separated them, she rallied her courage to support a conversation which seemed inevitable, and to which she was the more reconciled, as, believing she beheld the man who had

haunted O'Carroll, she hoped to gain some intelligence respecting the motives of his conduct.

Accordingly, with a firmness of voice and manner which evinced unusual power of self-command, she replied to his observation,

"You, perhaps forget, when you complain of this people, Mr. Forrester, that you plotted to betray them, and sought to injure them deeply and permanently, by communicating intelligence to the enemy.

"And is it not allowable, Miss Courtland; is it not even incumbent on us to serve our country by every lawful means?" he asked, surprised and somewhat awed by the dignified composure of her manner.

"Most certainly," she replied; "provided that you are guided by a pure and worthy motive. But you spoke of being an exile; and there are few banished men, Mr. Forrester, who are so patriotic as to betray the land of their adoption, for the purpose of serving that, which has cast them from her bosom."

Forrester smiled scornfully, as he replied,

"You are right; nor will I affect a disinterestedness which I am far from feeling. Besides; if I wished it, I could not conceal from you my motives, since, if I mistake not, you know them but too well already. That proverb-loving, scripture-quoting Quaker, has doubtless told you all, and more than all; but I care not; and I freely confess to you, that not affection for my own country, to which I know no obligation, but hatred to this land of knaves and fools, induced me to inform against them and to wish for their ruin, careless of what might befall those, who were silly enough to cross the Atlantic for the sake of fighting the dastardly rebels. But this is a matter of no moment at present. I have other thoughts to engage me now; and first of all, I wish to ask, if you know whether Captain O'Carroll has gone abroad this morning?"

"He has," returned Catherine; and then added quickly, "but why do you inquire? Is Captain O'Carroll well known to you? and are you the person, who has so often met him in this place?"

"He has told you then, of our nocturnal meetings?" said Forrester, with a malicious smile; "and who did he fancy me to be?"

"He could not tell, of course," returned Catherine; "but why have you concealed your person, and endeavoured to excite him against one, to whom he owes many obligations? knowing too, as you must, if you have any acquaintance with his character, his impetuous temperament, which is kindled by the smallest spark."

"I know it well, Miss Courtland," returned Forrester; "and it but renders him the fitter tool for my purpose. Cogent reasons have induced me to conceal my person from his knowledge, at least, till my object is accomplished. And now, Madam, may I inquire if you know, for what purpose Captain O'Carroll has gone out thus early?"

"You are aware to what a fatal deed you have endeavoured to incite him," said the undaunted Catherine, assured by Forrester's interested inquiries, that he was the instigator of the duel; "and the heart must be unfeeling indeed," she added, "which can reflect upon the probable consequences of such an event, without regret and horror."

"The blood be upon my head! I care not, so that I attain the vengeance I desire," he exclaimed, with a look of ferocity which curdled Catherine's blood, and caused her to retreat still farther from the person of her savage companion. "Miss Courtland," he added, without appearing to observe her gesture of abhorrence, "revenge is not sweeter to the untamed Indian of the forests, than to the heart of the injured Irishman! I have panted after it for months, and now that it appears within my grasp, nothing less than supernatural power shall prevent the attainment of my wishes."

"Supernatural power has often thwarted the designs of the wicked," said Catherine, calmly, "and caused them to revert upon his own head. But who has so deeply injured you, as to banish from your heart all sense of moral or religious feeling; and cause you to



cherish those malignant passions which debase the mind, and blast the germ of every virtue?"

Forrester looked at her in surprise, and said, after a momentary pause,

"I know not the woman in existence, who would dare to speak to me in this retired spot, as you have done. But dead as you imagine me to every noble feeling, I am not utterly insensible, since I can yet admire in others, virtues which I am unable to imitate. Your courage, firmness, and self-command, are equally rare and admirable, in one of your sex, beauty, and youth; and they demand the respect even of the reckless being, who might have been other than he is, had he been early taught those precepts, and guided by those principles, which have given to your mind a tone of such virtuous elevation. But it is too late to change my course; I have been buffeted by fortune, till I have learned to consider all mankind as my enemies; though it is against those only, who have personally injured me, that I devise plans of vengeance."

Catherine regarded her lawless companion with emotions of mingled horror and compassion; and though both from nature and education she was fearless, and even adventurous in her character, she would long since have endeavoured to escape from his society, had she not known from the information of Richard Hope, that although bold and presumptuous in his language, Forrester was in reality a very gascon, whose threats were idle, and who while he made a show of resistance ever shunned, with the cunning of a true coward, the force of a brave arm, or the virtuous eloquence of a courageous mind. Seeing also, that he made no effort to advance a step nearer to her, and secure of a safe and speedy retreat in case he should grow presuming, she resolved to hazard a few more questions, in the hope of learning the cause of his hatred towards Grahame; and still affecting to believe O'Carroll the principal object of his dislike, she asked him in a mild but firm tone,

"And why, Mr. Forrester, is Captain O'Carroll so ob-

noxious to you, that you have incited him to endanger his life, in order to gratify your revenge?"

"He is not particularly obnoxious to me," returned Forrester, "though I heartily despise him, for the facility with which he suffers himself to be governed. It is Colonel Grahame whom I so heartily detest, Miss Courtland; and I have chosen the credulous fool, O'Carroll, to chastise the rebel's insolence. You recollect the affair of the papers, in which I was concerned at Albany, and which but for the cowardice of Richard Hope, would have reached their place of destination in safety. Their seizure compelled me to a flight, which brought with it many disagreeable consequences; and I resolved, should I ever encounter the Indian who took them from me, to reward him as he merited. The glimpse I had of him at the time, though hasty, was sufficient to identify his person, and when by chance, I one evening met him in this forest I recognised him immediately. He was walking with Colonel Grahame, and I followed them unobserved to a cottage, which I knew to contain the object of Captain O'Carroll's affections. The next evening I again met the Indian; he was alone, and I accosted him; he did not recognise me till my incautious questions betrayed me, and he positively refused to answer them; but I seconded my solicitations with a flask of choice Hollands, which I chanced to have about my person, and against whose enticements the savage was not proof. As he warmed, he became more communicative, and I learned it was Colonel Grahame, to whom my papers were delivered; and that had they not been obtained as they were, my person was to have been seized by his order, and detained in custody to prevent my future agency in giving assistance to the British. For this I swore revenge; but not for this alone. The lady, whom he has secreted from the world, and made either his mistress or his wife, has long been the object of my affections, as well as of Captain O'Carroll's; and the injury, which he has done us both, by monopolizing her, ought not to go unpunished. When I questioned the Indian concern-

ing her, notwithstanding his inebriety, he resolutely refused to answer my inquiries. Provoked by his audacious obstinacy, I beat him soundly, though since that time, I confess I have been wary of him, knowing as I do, how fierce these heathen dogs are in their vengeance ; and as for the Colonel, he is always armed to the teeth, and so guarded by men and dogs that it is vain to think of taking him at unawares."

"And so you selected Captain O'Carroll to do a deed upon which you were afraid yourself to adventure?" exclaimed Catherine, in a tone expressive of indignation and contempt.

"It was not fear, but policy which suggested this plan," said Forrester ; "I had my own ends to accomplish by it, Miss Courtland."

"In a word, Mr. Forrester," said Catherine, indignantly, "you hope that the quarrel which you have originated, may prove fatal to both parties, and leave the lady in your power."

"I care not to tell you what I hope or design," returned Forrester, with a smile of malicious pleasure. "I must be off to learn how the affair has terminated. Grahame's rebel heart, I trust, is by this time well perforated with bullets ; and it will be all the better for me if O'Carroll chances to get one lodged in the centre of his own. But good morning, Miss Courtland ; betray me if you choose ; it can work me no harm, since my object is doubtless accomplished ; and whether it is or not, I am about to quit this inhospitable country, never more to behold it. Farewell, madam ; I have yet enough of the feelings of humanity remaining to respect and admire the superior lovelines of a mind like yours, and to wish that Heaven may for once be just, and bestow happiness where it is so truly merited."

He bent low, with an air of humble reverence, as he spoke ; and when he finished, was turning to depart, when his design was prevented by the appearance of the Indian Ohmeina, who, with a bold and lofty step advanced directly towards him. His air was determined, and his eyes sparkled with indignation and con-

tempt, as he bent them fixedly upon the countenance of Forrester, who, justly dreading the vengeance he merited, changed color, and looked around with an anxious glance, uncertain whether to effect a hasty retreat or to assume the air of impudent defiance, and boldly to face his incensed antagonist.

Catherine still remained upon the spot, where she had been conversing with Forrester; and could no longer doubt his cowardice and guilt, when she witnessed the terror which blanched his cheek upon the appearance of the Indian. Expecting every moment to see him fly into the recesses of the forest, she continued intently to observe him; but whatever might have been his wish, he seemed ashamed to execute it, and Ohmeina, who had by this time approached near him, drew himself up to his utmost height, and folding his arms with an air of dignity, remained calmly and silently surveying him. Forrester's eyes sunk abashed beneath the steady gaze of the Indian, as if conscious of his inferiority to this virtuous son of the desert, and afraid lest he should penetrate the secrets of that guilty heart, which even its wretched possessor could not examine without a shudder of dismay and horror.

At length Mr. Forrester, no longer able to endure the torturing scrutiny, raised his pale countenance, and exclaimed, in an accent of mingled fear and rage,

"Why is it that you stop my path? stand aside, and suffer me to pass; I am armed; though, unless you force me to it, I would not soil my weapon with the blood of an Indian dog like you."

Ohmeina grasped the handle of a dirk, which appeared above a girdle, woven from the sinews of the deer; and pointing significantly to the quiver of arrows which was fastened on his shoulder, said,

"I can use this weapon, friend, as well as thou canst; and those arrows are dipped in deadly poison; they never flew from my bow in vain; and he whom they pierced beheld no more the sun, nor the green earth; nor ever again embraced the objects of his love."

"Why do you seek me with such murderous intents?" exclaimed Forrester, alarmed by his insinuations; "I am quietly pursuing my way, and wherefore do you interrupt it, and address me with such a threatening aspect? Away! Begone! I can no longer be detained."

"I have somewhat to say to thee before thou goest," returned the Indian. "Rememberest thou the day when thou didst tempt me to taste that cursed liquor, and when thou hadst made of me a very brute, knowest thou not how thou didst revile me and insult me; how thou didst even strike me, because I would not betray to thee my brother? Dost thou not remember it?" A glow of shame and indignation was visible through the swarthy complexion of the Indian, as he spoke of his disgrace; and without giving Forrester time to reply, he continued,

"Thou hast heard of a Mohawk's revenge; and what punishment thinkest thou the sachems of my nation would decree against the white man, who had dared to insult the warrior Ohmeina? Couldst thou stand at the stake, and see the slow fires rising around thee, without a shriek of anguish? Or, couldst thou"—

"Nay, name not your horrible tortures," interrupted the affrighted Forrester; "I have done nothing to merit such a fate; if I chastised you, it was because you provoked me, and I thought you deserved it."

"It was not for such as thou art to inflict it," said Ohmeina; "thou madest me a brute, and thou didst strike me, because I acted like my fellows. But hear me, brother; for I can still call thee so, though thou hast done me wrong; I have learned to be a Christian, and to forgive my enemies, as I hope to be forgiven by the great and good Being, who created me; and I freely forgive thee the evil which thou didst to me. But thou must go with me to one, who perchance may wish to speak with thee."

"And to whom would you lead me?" inquired Forrester.

"Follow me and thou shalt know," said the Indian; and with a gesture of authority, he moved forward. But Mr. Forrester suspecting that he intended to conduct

him to some place where Grahame, in case he should survive the duel, might see and converse with him, remained stationary, his countenance darkened with displeasure, and said, in a tone of sullen defiance,

"I am subject to no man's will; and neither your threats, nor your weapons shall compel me to follow you a single step. I have nought to do with your master," he added, emboldened by the pacific disposition which the Indian had evinced; "nor has he a right to interfere with my concerns. Bid him attend to his own affairs, and leave me to look after mine; when I crave his advice, it will be time enough to give it. And as for you, friend, let me give you one caution,—come no more in my way, if you would not have this stout cudgel broken across your shoulders; and you see it is twice the size of that which I spoiled in the same service on a former occasion. So fare thee well; and as you love your life, let not your swarthy countenance again darken my path."

He turned quickly away, but had scarcely advanced two steps, when the Indian darted with inconceivable rapidity after him, and seized his arm with a grasp which terror as well as inferiority of muscular strength rendered it impossible for him to resist.

"Thinkest thou," exclaimed the Indian, in a terrible voice, "that Ohmeina is to be daunted by thy threats? he who has faced death in a thousand forms, and slain with his own hand the bravest warriors of the Iriquois? And shall he tremble at the anger of such a thing as *thou* art? thou who didst flee from the weak arm of the fallen Indian, even when, grovelling on the earth, he raised it to strike thee from him?"

The color which the excitement of the preceding moment had called into the countenance of Forrester, faded rapidly into the paleness of mortal fear, and he seemed incapable of making a single effort for freedom, or pronouncing a word in opposition to the torrent of Ohmeina's invective. But when the Indian ceased, and with a look of ineffable scorn, endeavoured to force him onward, Forrester, roused by the exigency of his situation,

and by the immediate fear of those consequences which a discovery of his person and designs must occasion, felt the necessity of exertion; and vainly struggling to conceal his emotion, he turned to Ohmeina, and said, in a voice half fearful and half insolent,

"I command you to loose your hold of me this instant; I am subject neither to your will nor to that of your employer; and if you do not quit me directly, I will try the strength of my club upon your shoulders."

The Indian made no reply, nor even changed a muscle of his countenance; but dexterously seizing Forrester's club, he placed one end of it beneath his foot, and bending the other upward with his hand, snapped the stout cudgel in two, as easily as if it had been only a withered twig, and threw the pieces as far as he could into the forest. Forrester's eyes flashed with inconceivable fury; and Catherine, who still remained a silent observer of the scene, recoiled at the demoniac expression of his countenance. Corporeal fear, even the natural love of life and safety, seemed lost in the inexpressible rage of the moment; and with the gesture of an angry tiger, which the hunters have brought to bay, he sprung furiously upon the Indian. But the wary Ohmeina, by a sudden motion, evaded his meditated blow, while Forrester, full of resentment and mortification, stood for a moment silent and abashed, ashamed of his impotent rage, and rebuked by the calm and unmoved countenance of the dignified Indian.

"Thou canst not escape from my grasp," said Ohmeina, regarding with disdain the renewed struggles of his captive for freedom. "Thou must follow where thou art led, and if thou art innocent, thou hast nothing to fear."

"And by what authority, I again demand," exclaimed Forrester, "do you presume to lay violent hands upon my person?"

"If thou art innocent," again repeated Ohmeina, "thou wilt not fear to go whither I shall lead thee. But thy thoughts are wicked; thou hast spoken evil of my

brother, and thou wearest deadly weapons, with which thou dost intend to pierce his heart."

"They shall pierce thine, vilest of thy vile race?" exclaimed Forrester, again transported by passion beyond the bounds of fear and prudence; and he drew forth a dirk which he had worn concealed in his bosom, and made a violent thrust at the Indian.

Ohmeina parried it with dexterity; and taking advantage of his adversary's discomfiture, he ingeniously contrived to seize the handle of the weapon, which, after a short struggle, he succeeded in wresting from him. Forrester seemed resolved to recover it; and though the Indian turned the glittering point towards him, bidding him beware how he adventured upon destruction, he sprang resolutely forward to grasp the handle of the dirk, when his foot slipped, and he fell prostrate on the ground. In seeking to save himself he caught hold of Ohmeina, and accidentally struck the weapon from his hand, which rather accelerated his fall and proved the means of unforeseen misfortune; for the dirk remained upright against the stump of an elder bush, and as the unhappy man fell, the sharp point entered his side, and the blade snapping in the middle, was left in the wound. The blood gushed forth; and Catherine, shocked by the fatal termination of the scene, which she had witnessed with extreme interest, forgot every feeling of abhorrence and aversion, in the wish to administer relief to the sufferer. She was a stranger to those weak and fastidious fears which would have driven most females from the spot, or have thrown them into swoons of hysterical terror; and though gifted with sensibility as exquisite as the softest and most timid of her sex, it was not of that morbid kind which exhausts itself in tears and expressions of sympathy, and deems it sufficient to pity the sufferer without the pain of stretching forth an assisting hand to relieve him.

Hers was ever active, ever solicitous to relieve the wants and soften the distresses of others; and the moment she saw Mr. Forrester fall, her first impulse was to fly towards him, and lend what aid was in her power.



Ohmeina was bending over him, and had already cut away his dress so as to disclose a ghastly wound in his right side, from which the end of the broken weapon protruded, having entered the body of the unfortunate man to the depth of several inches.

A faint ejaculation of horror escaped the lips of Catherine, as she viewed it, when Ohmeina, who had not before observed her presence, started and looked upon her with a momentary awe and surprise. Notwithstanding his civilization, he still retained a large portion of the superstition peculiar to the Indian tribes; and though the deep and reverential awe with which he turned to gaze upon the lovely figure of Catherine, faded away when he perceived the vision to be mortal, a glow of pleased surprise, of admiration and respect, lighted up his dark countenance, when he beheld her beautiful face full of kindness and compassion, bending with interest over the bleeding and unfortunate man.

"It is all over," said Forrester, in a voice of anguish, as he caught her pitying glance; "leave me, leave me to die as the fool dieth, and end a life of crime by a death of misery and despair."

"No, something may be done," said Catherine, earnestly.

"Nothing can be done," said Forrester; "I feel, I know it; and what a life have I lived to be cut off at last without the warning of a moment!"

"God is merciful," said Catherine, deeply affected by his sufferings; "and is never deaf to the prayer of the truly penitent."

"He is just, as well as merciful, and my prayers would be an abomination to him," exclaimed the wretched man.

"Not if they are offered in sincerity," returned Catherine; "his ear is open to all who cry unto him, and even at the last hour the prayer of the penitent thief was not rejected, because it was offered in the humility of a contrite spirit."

The unhappy man groaned aloud, and threw his arm across his pale features, distorted with pain, and with the

horrible workings of a guilty conscience, whose goadings in this hour of extremity were sharper than the sting of serpents, and more agonizing than the keenest pangs of bodily suffering.

"Can we do nothing for him, Ohmeina?" asked Catherine, in an anxious voice. The Indian drew from his deerskin pouch, a small bark box, which contained a powder of very aromatic flavor, and said, as he held it towards her,

"If thou hast courage to see me draw forth the steel, this powder may give him relief. It sometimes heals the deadliest wounds, and my mother, the wisest among the women of her tribe, taught me to prepare it from the healing plants of the forest."

"I have courage to see any thing which may give the sufferer ease," said Catherine; "do not hesitate, Ohmeina; and if needful, I am ready to assist you."

Ohmeina bent down to perform the painful operation, while Catherine, holding the box which contained the specific, knelt beside him, waiting to lend her aid in case it should be requisite. A torrent of blood followed the course of the steel when the Indian drew it forth; and as the vital current gushed like a flood upon the ground, even Catherine's firm heart became sick, and the crimson of her cheek faded to a deadly paleness; but she felt the necessity of exertion, and with recovered fortitude, she applied her handkerchief to the wound in order to stop the effusion of blood, which had already reduced the sufferer to a state of insensibility. The application of the powder appeared to staunch it in a degree; but the Indian saw that other remedies must be used before the wounded man could be removed with safety; and he said to Catherine,

"Thou art braver than the boldest squaws of our tribes; there is none, save Minoya, who can equal thee; and if thou wilt consent to remain beside this bleeding man, I will go for such things as are necessary, and return with some one who can help to bear him to a place of shelter. But if thou fearest"—

"No, I do not fear, if you will hasten," said Catherine; "but should he grow worse, you know I can do nothing to relieve him, nor is there any whom I can call to my assistance."

"He will be no worse," said Ohmeina; "so sit by him as thou now dost; and before the shadow of that rock shall stretch across the path, I will return to thee."

The sound of voices approaching, prevented the reply of Catherine, and delayed the instant departure of Ohmeina. They both bent forward to listen, and the quick ear of the Indian immediately recognizing the familiar tones of Colonel Grahame's voice, he exclaimed, "My brother comes!" and bounded from the spot to meet him, just as he, with Captain Talbot, appeared in sight.

### CHAPTER XIII.

"Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes;  
That when I see another man like him,  
I may avoid him."

*Shakspeare.*

CATHERINE rose precipitately from the side of the wounded man, as Grahame and Talbot approached, while the color which the melancholy scene had chased from her countenance, rushed tumultuously back, dying both cheek and brow with the deepest and most vivid crimson. Profound astonishment was depicted on the faces of the gentlemen, as they approached the spot, and beheld the pale and ghastly figure of the lifeless man extended on the ground, and remarked the disordered dress and appearance of Catherine, who stood in silence beside him, blushes mantling on her cheeks, and the most powerful emotion visible on her countenance. It seemed, in this moment of mystery and excitement, as if the love which Captain Talbot had cherished for

her, was only transiently smothered, and not extinct in his heart; for after a minute passed in speechless astonishment, he sprang towards her, and eagerly clasping her hands, exclaimed in a voice of impassioned feeling, which resembled rather the fervor of the ardent O'Carroll, than the cool and rational language of the philosophic Talbot,

"For the love of Heaven, my sweetest Catherine, tell me the meaning of this scene. Why is it that you, about whom every thing should wear an aspect of joy and pleasure, are in this lonely spot, surrounded by such frightful spectacles of death and horror?"

Catherine was embarrassed by the passionate tenderness of his address; but she wished not to appear to notice it; and therefore replied with enforced composure,

"I can tell you nothing now, Talbot; I have witnessed a dreadful scene; but this is not a moment for explanation."

Talbot seemed restored to recollection by the calmness of her voice and manner; and though he colored slightly, he betrayed no other symptom of embarrassment, but moved towards the wounded man with the intention of examining his person. Forrester's arm still lay across his face, and Talbot, gently removing it, stood gazing with a look of perplexed recognition, upon the pale and deathlike countenance. When he quitted Catherine, Colonel Grahame, who had been conversing apart with Ohmeina, approached her. He had gathered from the Indian a short explanation of the scene, and learned with emotion, how noble had been the conduct of Catherine. Taking her passive hand, he pressed it fervently between his own, and said, in an accent of irrepressible feeling,

"I am not surprised to learn that *you* have acted with such heroic firmness; *you*, my dear Miss Courland, who are superior to all weakness, and ready always with a voice of pity and a hand of kindness, to relieve the sufferings of the unfortunate. How resistless is

beauty when adorned with the unfading flowers of virtue and benevolence!"

There was less of passion than of deep and heartfelt tenderness in Grahame's voice, as he pronounced these words; and he seemed for several moments absorbed by feelings which he dared not utter; for he retained possession of Catherine's hand, till feeling the awkwardness of her situation, she made an effort to withdraw it; when, with a gesture of profound respect, he immediately relinquished it.

"I have been of little service here this morning," she said, after a brief pause; "but painful as the scene has been to me, I should not regret the chance which led me to witness it, could I have been the means of preventing its fatal termination."

"And do you know this daring stranger," inquired Grahame. "Ohmeina has told me a strange story of his having encountered him on a former occasion, and of the vengeance which he then denounced against me, for causing him to be deprived of some treasonable papers, which he designed for the enemy. The Indian, it seems, declined informing me of this rencontre at the time, because it involved his own disgrace, which he has, however, candidly confessed; and as it is the first offence of the kind which I ever knew him commit, I cannot refuse my forgiveness. But, Miss Courtland, this must certainly be the person who has favored Captain O'Carroll with so many nocturnal interviews, and successfully excited him to doubt my truth and honor."

"It is the same," said Catherine; "he confessed it to me himself."

She then related the manner in which she had encountered him, and the substance of the conversation, which had passed between them. Grahame listened to her with attention; and when she had finished, he informed her that no serious evil would result from Forrester's malicious plans and insinuations, as he had just parted from Captain O'Carroll, with whom every difficulty had been so amicably settled as to give assurance of continued and undiminished friendship. Catherine's

heart bounded with pleasure at this intelligence, which inspired her with a hope that the engagements of Colonel Grahame were not so binding as she had feared; and again she ventured to indulge those delicious reveries which had once yielded her such pure and unalloyed happiness. Before she could reply to him, however, Talbot, who, till now, had been scrutinizing the features of Forrester, advanced towards her, and entreated her to inform him, if she knew the name of the wounded man, or had ever seen him before.

"I saw him frequently at Albany," she replied, "while resident in the family of the Quaker, Richard Hope; and I instantly recognised him, when I met him by accident this morning. He was known to me at Albany as Mr. Forrester, a native of Ireland; but of his connexions and family, I know nothing, as I have heard Mr. Hope say, he ever preserved an invincible silence on that subject."

"He had doubtless cogent reasons for secrecy," said Talbot, "since in this night-walking, mischief-making Forrester, for I heard you tell Colonel Grahame it was the same who haunted O'Carroll, I have, after close scrutiny, been able to detect the features, changed indeed, but still the identical features of that Dalkeith who was once, Colonel Grahame, the lover of Marion Spencer, and the rival of whom you have so often heard O'Carroll speak."

"You astonish me," said Grahame. "Why should this man, if he loves Miss Spencer, assist to place her in the power of a rival? Or if he has ceased to love her, is it probable, from what we know of his character, that he would voluntarily exert himself to promote the happiness of others?"

"I know not," said Talbot, with a perplexed air; "I believe, however, that he has been playing a deep and hazardous game, which will perhaps cost him his life; though, I hope, before he dies, he will have sense and conscience enough to answer our inquiries, as the slightest atonement he can make for the trouble he has given

us. But here comes the Indian with your servant, prepared with a litter to remove him."

Ohmeina had quitted the place soon after the Colonel's arrival, to summon his servant, whom he had left, as was often his custom when he visited the cottage, at the head of the little lane, in charge of his horse. Though on this morning he had ridden to the cottage, he had on his return with Captain Talbot, dismounted at the head of the lane, and accompanied Talbot along the path, in order to finish the conversation in which they were engaged, when the tragic scene in which Forrester bore so conspicuous a part, burst unexpectedly upon them. Ohmeina, with the assistance of William, had formed a rude litter of sticks, which they had covered with moss and dried leaves; but Grahame was undecided whither to have him conveyed; and though Catherine urged his being sent to her father's, because she thought he would there be comfortably situated and properly attended, the Colonel would not listen to her proposal, unwilling, on every account, to intrude such a guest upon her.

Their perplexity, however, was shortly terminated by the revival of the wounded man, to whom Grahame instantly addressed himself, and after a few kind inquiries and expressions, requested him to inform them whither he wished to be conveyed. He seemed agitated by the appearance of the Colonel, and without making any direct reply to his last question, he demanded if his wound was mortal. Grahame looked at Ohmeina for an answer, who replied in a grave tone,

"There is no hope for thee, thou must die; and may God pardon all thy sins."

Forrester groaned aloud, and said, with difficulty and emotion,

"Then it matters not; carry me to the farm-house on the left of the forest; you'll know it by three tall sycamores, which screen it on the north. I will die there; there, where ——"

He stopped suddenly, exhausted by the effort of speaking, and overwhelmed by the certainty of the fate

which awaited him. All seemed affected by his sufferings; but not a word was spoken; for they felt how vain would be the attempt to offer consolation in a moment of such agonizing excitement. Talbot and the Colonel assisted in placing him on the litter; and when they were prepared to move with him, Grahame turned to bid Catherine good morning; to express his regret at being obliged to quit her, and to entreat that she would return immediately home, lest so long an exposure to the chilly air of the morning should prove injurious to her health. Trifling as these attentions were in themselves, there was something so touching in the voice which uttered them, and an expression of tenderness, so deep and unequivocal in the looks which accompanied them, that Catherine's cheek glowed with emotion, and her eyes sunk abashed beneath his ardent gaze. Grahame beheld with delight the confusion of her countenance: and conscious that he could now break from the cloud which had so long shadowed him, and offer to her acceptance a heart, open and free from suspicion or reproach, he permitted the feelings which from the most honorable motives he had struggled to repress, to triumph over doubt and uncertainty, and to revel in the delightful anticipation of the moment when his long wished happiness should be complete.

Catherine's emotions were of the same nature, as she pursued her way home, accompanied by Talbot, who during their walk gave her a circumstantial detail of all that had taken place since the commencement of the preceding evening. As she listened to the narrative of Grahame's noble conduct, her heart swelled with deeper pride and tenderness, and tears of unmingled pleasure filled her eyes.

Grahame, in the mean time, anxious to fulfil the wishes and provide for the comfort of the wounded man, preceded the litter, which William and Ohmeina were bearing towards the farm-house. Uncertain exactly where to look for it, he left them to follow slowly, and walked forward to discover the three sycamores, by which Forrester had told him the dwelling was



designated. After quitting the forest path he turned to the left, and followed the windings of a brook through fields and thickets, till it descended into a deep hollow, where it settled into a pond of considerable size. On the margin of this pond, Grahame discerned the sycamores standing by themselves, and protecting with their spreading arms an ancient-looking farm-house, whose decaying walls, and moss-grown roof, were scarcely distinguishable from the grey trunks and leafless branches of the trees which sheltered it.

Grahame felt assured that this must be the house he sought, and he hastily descended the hill to give notice to its inmates, of the accident which had befallen the unfortunate Forrester. As he advanced along the borders of the pond, he observed a youth, standing beneath the trees, who with careless indolence was launching withered leaves and twigs upon the surface of the water, which he watched with no small delight, till they were lost in a little whirlpool created by a sudden eddy; when with unwearying pleasure he sent forth another fairy fleet, to share the fate of that which had preceded it. He raised his head, at the sound of footsteps, and looked rather disconcerted when he perceived Grahame, as if uncertain whether to retreat or not. But there was something in the noble demeanour of the Colonel which inspired respect and confidence; and the lad, suspending his childish employment, made no effort to fly after the first glance; but touched his hand to his worn out hat, and raised it in token of civil salutation. Grahame returned it with native courteousness, and without any prelude, inquired who lived in the farm-house beside them.

"My grandfather and grandmother live there;" replied the youth, with a stare of stupid astonishment.

"And does no one else live there?" demanded Grahame; "be not afraid to speak; no harm is designed you; but I met with a wounded man this morning, who desired to be conveyed to the farm-house near which grew three sycamores; and I am anxious to know if I am right in bringing him to this place?"

The litter, at this moment appeared upon the brow of the hill, and the boy no sooner perceived it, than pale with affright, he sprang away without replying, and was in a moment out of sight. Grahame knew not how to interpret this conduct which seemed the effect of conscious guilt alone; but he could now take no measures to pursue or examine him, and assured he could not be mistaken in the house, he proceeded immediately towards it.

After knocking several times without success, he entered a narrow passage; and attracted by the smell of savory viands, proceeded toward an apartment at its lower extremity. He gently pushed open the door, and found himself in a large antiquated kitchen, which however, received an air of cheerfulness and comfort from the blaze of a huge fire burning brightly on the hearth. An aged man and woman were seated before it, at their morning repast; and they looked hastily up as Grahame stood before them. The man gazed with a vacant and unmeaning stare, which indicated that time, while he destroyed the beauty and vigor of the body, had also crippled the energy of the mind.

The woman appeared somewhat younger than her ancient partner; and though well advanced in the vale of years, her clear blue eye and ruddy complexion indicated a serene and healthy old age. Her clean checked apron, and her snowy locks, combed smoothly down, beneath a cap of unrivalled whiteness, gave to her person an air of decency and neatness which prepossessed Grahame in her favor.

Glancing her eye hastily over the noble figure of the stranger, and perceiving by his dress that he was an American officer, she rose, and folding her hands across her breast, curtsied with profound respect.

"Do not let me disturb you, my good woman," said Grahame, kindly; "sit down: we may want your assistance shortly, and I should be loath to request it before you had concluded your repast."

"Will you share our poor meal with us, sir?" said the woman; and brushing the dust from a leather-bot-

tomed chair, she drew it towards the table. "I should be ashamed to sit," she continued, "and see a brave soldier standing who is fighting for me and mine."

Grahame smiled and accepted the offered chair, anxious to gratify the kind-hearted dame, and willing to partake of the wheaten cakes which smoked upon the table. His hostess was delighted by this condescension; her face glowed with pride and pleasure; and tapping her husband on his shoulder to awaken his attention, for he had appeared to notice nothing after the first glance, she said,

"John, this is one of General Washington's brave soldiers; and he is not too proud, heaven bless him, to sit down at our humble board and eat of our scanty meal. Look up, John, and bid him welcome."

The old man raised his faded eyes, and stretched forth his shaking hand, saying with a laugh of inanity, "Glad you have come, Tom!" He then relapsed into silence; but cast from time to time, a vague glance upon the stranger, whose presence seemed slightly to perplex him; though he shortly relapsed into his usual state of torpidity, and appeared insensible to all that passed around him.

"Poor John was not always thus," said the wife, with a sigh; "trouble and age have brought him to this; and he thinks every one that comes to the house is our son Tom, who was killed at the battle of Trenton."

"And have you no son left to supply his place?" asked Grahame, in a compassionate tone.

"None, who can supply *his* place," while tears of maternal sorrow filled her eyes. "He was the best of children, and a hope and comfort to us. It was hard parting, when he left us; but he longed, as he said, to serve under the standard of the great and good Washington; and we too, were proud that *our* son should be numbered with the brave defenders of liberty; and in the vain folly of our hearts, we hoped to see him return covered with glory and honor. But we never saw him more; and when the tidings of his death reached us, we should have sunk under our grief, but for the good-

ness of God, who supported us, and gave us strength, according to our day."

Grahame was touched by the piety and tenderness of the bereaved mother, and kindly taking her hand, he said,

"Many a fond mother, my good woman, has given the son of her hopes to the service of her afflicted country. And if they fall, there is comfort in the thought that it is in the noblest and best of causes; a cause, which all good men espouse, and which we humbly hope is favored by the approbation of our God."

"And may he prosper it," said the woman; "though to me it has been a source of bitterness and sorrow, I will yet pray for its success. My child was ripe for glory, and I do not murmur because it pleased the Lord to take the life, which he graciously lent."

"But you are not utterly bereaved?" said Grahame; "I saw a lad beside the pond, who told me he was your grandchild."

"Yes, sir, the only one we have," returned the woman, "and all that is left us of our beloved son. He is a good boy, and kind to us; and it is a comfort to me, to see how his poor old grandfather doats upon him."

"And have you no one else in your family?" inquired Grahame, wishing to break his intelligence with caution, and somewhat surprised that a woman of so much piety, good sense, and good feeling, should have any connexion with a man so worthless and depraved as he conceived this Forrester to be. She seemed disconcerted by his question, and Colonel Grahame observing it, said,

"I do not make this inquiry from mere idle curiosity; I have a stronger motive, of which you shall soon be informed."

The woman thus pressed, replied with hesitation,

"We have a lodger, sir, a quiet and peaceable man, and, I trust, you mean him no harm, by asking after him."

"Is he a relative or friend of yours?" inquired the Colonel, apprehensive, should he be so, of shocking her by tidings of the evil which had befallen him.

"He is no kin to me or my husband," she replied; "and I never saw him till about three months ago, when one morning he came here with my grandson, whom he met in the fields, and asked me to let him lodge here a few weeks. He seemed sober and honest; and as we were poor, and in want of the money which he offered for his board, we agreed to his request, and he has been as kind and civil a man as I would wish to live with, eating his meals quietly, and spending his time, for the most part, abroad. About three weeks since, he told me he had a wife, who was with her relations in a distant part of the country; but that he should bring her here soon; and he hoped I would accommodate her for a few days, till he was ready to take her away. But I heard nothing more of the matter, till last night, when he came home late, in great spirits, and said his wife was at a farmer's a few miles distant, and he should go in the morning, and bring her back with him. And sure enough, he was away before the cock crowed, and Jemmy, my grandson, with him, though the boy came home an hour ago, without Mr. Walton or the lady. But I fear by your questions sir, and by Jemmy's behaviour, that all is not right; for the lad seemed sullen, and would tell me nothing that I asked him; but after eating his breakfast went out, and I have not seen him since."

"And is Walton the name of your guest?" inquired Grahame, who had listened attentively to these particulars, which added confirmation to the villanous character and designs of this unprincipled instigator of mischief.

"That is the name by which he told us to call him," replied the woman, whose suspicions of her 'kind and civil' lodger, began to be excited by the reiterated inquiries of the stranger. Grahame, however, till he had received still stronger proof, would not insinuate any thing against his character; but hastened to inform his

hostess of the fatal accident which had happened to her guest.

Dame Evans, for so the good woman was called in the limited circle of her acquaintance, seemed greatly shocked by the intelligence; and with a degree of activity surprising at her advanced age, she rose to prepare for the reception of the wounded man. Much as she appeared to feel for his misfortunes (and the kind dame had a heart as tender as the youngest and fairest of her sex), yet Grahame could not but smile at the air of bustling importance which she assumed; and which seemed to evince that any excitement was pleasing, if it tended to vary the dull and tiresome monotony of her retired life.

As she arranged upon an old table a few vials, containing balsams of her own distillation, expressed from such herbs as she had learned to believe of sovereign efficacy, Grahame heard her say, "These may do the poor soul good; but, wicked or not, I would never have believed that any harm could come to him in this place. And from an Indian, too! who would have thought it? the heathen savages! the best of them are more treacherous than the evil one himself!"

Grahame smiled at this soliloquy, and was at first inclined to rescue the character of his favorite Ohmeina from the dame's sweeping anathema; though, upon second thought, he concluded to let the actions of the Indian plead his own cause; and he knew they would do it with a force which the most obdurate and determined prejudice could not resist. He, therefore, passed on in silence, and went to the door, to look out for the litter. It was close by; and in the course of a minute more, the wounded and insensible man was borne by his careful attendants into the apartment which he had occupied for several preceding weeks. Dame Evans had prepared the bed with fresh linen, kindled a brisk fire in the room, and now with motherly care, she sought to administer to his relief, and kindly produced from her scanty store all the little comforts which she had hoarded against a day of sickness and want.

Grahame thought of sending William to the camp for a surgeon ; but he had such perfect confidence in Olmeina's skill, that he felt positive, that were the case his own, he would willingly trust it; and he resolved, for that day at least, not to call in other aid. After forcing into the unwilling dame's hand a liberal token of her generosity, he returned to Valley Forge, leaving his servant and the Indian to take charge of the wounded man ; and directing Olmeina, in case his own remedies proved ineffectual, to summon a surgeon without delay.

As soon as his master was gone, William repaired to Major Courtland's, pursuant to the previous direction of Catherine, in order to procure some articles which she deemed indispensable to the comfort of the sufferer. Her heart and hand were ever open to relieve distress, and he returned to the farm-house laden with abundance of every thing which was proper and comfortable for the sick, and with an injunction to come to her in case any articles should be wanted which she had not sent. But Mr. Forrester was in no condition to enjoy any thing which earth could offer. During the day he was exercised with continued and excruciating pain ; or, if for a short interval he was favored with bodily ease, the anguish of his mind became intolerably keen, and he was frantic with the fear of death.

Towards evening he suffered less in body, and his mind was calm, though rather from exhaustion and despair, than because it was brightened with a hope of future peace and forgiveness ; for he felt with inexpressible anguish, that the prayers and agonizing tears of a death-bed repentance could never cancel the iniquity of a life like his, or inspire him with confidence towards God.

The day was closing in, when, as he awoke from a short slumber, and was lying in comparative ease, the door opened, and Captain O'Carroll stood before him. The wretched man no sooner beheld him, than he became still paler than before, and drawing the bedclothes over his face, exclaimed,

"You come, Captain O'Carroll, to reproach me, and I have deserved all you can say; for I have studied to injure and deceive you. But were your words sharper than poisoned arrows, they would not pierce me like the stings of my upbraiding conscience."

"I come not to reproach," said O'Carroll, "but to pity and console you, Mr. Forrester"—

"Call me not by that hateful name," interrupted the miserable man, throwing the slight covering from his face, and looking up with a wild and ghastly stare. "Call me Dalkeith, Captain O'Carroll! look upon me, and see if I am not he who has thwarted, vexed, disappointed, and deceived you! But, sit beside me, and you shall know all; though my last breath is spent in telling it, I will not cease till I have confessed every wrong which I have devised or committed against you."

"I forgive them all," said O'Carroll; "and I have no wish to pain you by such a recital. When you are better"—

"Better!" ejaculated Dalkeith, for Dalkeith indeed it was; "every moment which passes hurries me nearer to the grave!"

"And in it there is neither repentance nor hope," said O'Carroll; "so let me entreat you to think of them now, and not spend your last moments in a confession of injuries which are already forgiven."

"It is too late," said Dalkeith, in a tone of desperation; "speak not to me of an hereafter; my only hope is, that existence terminates in the tomb. So, hear me, O'Carroll; my sands are ebbing fast; and the moments are not to be trifled with."

O'Carroll was greatly shocked, but before he could reply, the door was again opened, and Colonel Grahame entered.

"Oh, you are indeed most welcome," exclaimed O'Carroll, in a low and eager tone; "this wretched man fills me with horror and concern; speak to him, Grahame, and bid him at this solemn moment to think only of the eternity which is about to open before him."



"I fear, alas!" said Grahame, sorrowfully, "that he is too old in vice to be softened by my arguments; but I will speak to him; perhaps I may move him to penitence, and even at the last hour, it may not be unavailing."

The Colonel seated himself beside Dalkeith, and after the kindest inquiries respecting his situation and feelings, he proceeded gradually, and with extreme delicacy, to speak of those sublime hopes and consolations which smooth the pillow of death, and dispel the darkness of the tomb. Grahame's countenance brightened, as he continued speaking; and the firmness and strength of his own faith infused into his voice and manner a touching and inspiring eloquence, which affected all present, and melted even the obdurate Dalkeith into tears.

Though once or twice he uttered an exclamation of despair, he was most of the time silent; and when, at length, Grahame, from the fear of exhausting him, closed his pathetic exhortation, Dalkeith remained long with closed eyes and motionless lips; but, finally, arousing himself, he looked towards Grahame and O'Carroll, and entreated that they would permit him to relieve his mind, by disclosing the injuries which he had meditated against them. Grahame thought best not to deny him; for he seemed unable to think of any thing else till he had confessed all the iniquity of his heart. He had, when young, been educated in the catholic religion; and though for many years neglected and forgotten, the rites of that religion now occurred to his remembrance, and he appeared anxious to perform an act, which, in the days of early innocence, he had been taught to consider a sacred and indispensable duty.

After dismissing William and the Indian, Grahame and O'Carroll seated themselves beside Dalkeith, and listened with interest to all that concerned themselves, and to much relating to Mr. Spencer and his daughter, of which Marion had already informed O'Carroll.

Dalkeith was exceedingly exhausted when he finished; and having waited till he was revived, Grahame and O'Carroll left him, in the hope that he might pass a

comfortable night. On his return home, O'Carroll found Catherine impatiently awaiting his arrival, and he communicated all the conversation and events of the evening.

The next morning when they visited the farm-house, their feelings were not again tortured by groans of anguish and expressions of hopeless despair; for the wretched sufferer had expired during the night, and his spirit was now in the presence of Him who judgeth every man according to his works.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

"For aught that ever I could read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth."  
*Shakspeare.*

**MR. SPENCER**, the father of Marion, early inherited, from a dissipated brother, the broken fortune of his ancestors. He inherited also their pride, which forbade him to repair its breaches by industry, and of course the only method left for him to pursue, was to amend it by a wealthy marriage. He therefore sought, among the rich and gay of his acquaintance, for a woman, who, with the indispensable requisite, should unite such qualities of the heart and mind, as would contribute to form the happiness of his domestic life. The search proved ineffectual; but still it was eagerly pursued till chance threw him into the society of a young orphan, whose only possessions were a beautiful person, and an amiable and accomplished mind.

Passionately fond of beauty, Mr. Spencer was instantly impressed by her charms; yet he felt the danger of yielding to their influence, and sought, by absence, to subdue his imprudent passion. But it served only to strengthen his affection, and again he returned to her

society. Accident soon discovered to him the influence which he had undesignedly gained over her affections ; and enraptured to find himself an object of deep and tender interest to the woman he adored, he forgot his poverty, his prudent resolutions ; he forgot every thing but the delicious consciousness of being beloved by Marion Stanley ; and in the delirious extacy of the moment, he poured forth the impassioned feelings of his heart, and was made completely happy by the blushing acknowledgement of Marion's devoted affections.

In the course of a few weeks, he received her hand at the altar, and sacrificing even the hereditary pride of family to his love, he disposed of his paternal estates, and having disincumbered himself of debt, retired, with what little property was left him from the wreck, to a small seat in the county of Ulster, which was all that he had reserved of his patrimonial inheritance. Here, with rigid economy, he trusted they should be able to subsist comfortably on their narrow income ; and in this calm and simple retirement, far from the tumult of the gay and fashionable world, of whose pleasures he had tasted even to satiety, he hoped, in the bosom of virtuous affection, to enjoy the pure and heartfelt delights of domestic happiness and peace.

Two years glided swiftly away, during which time Mr. Spencer's felicity was unalloyed, and as perfect as he could reasonably desire ; but shortly after that period, it pleased Heaven to deprive him of her, who had been the source of all his enjoyment, the object of his devoted tenderness, and the gentle inspirer of every hope which brightened the uncertain prospects of futurity. She left an infant daughter, whom the bereaved husband consigned to the care of a maternal aunt. Sunk in the deepest despondency, he felt himself unable even to perform the duties of a parent ; and yielding, in the solitude of his desolate home, to the anguish of unceasing regret, he willingly consigned to his kind relative the delightful task of guiding and protecting his infant child. Buried in a dream of grief, he suffered others to manage the affairs which he had been wont to look after with a

vigilant eye, and of course they soon became disordered and embarrassed; his tenants neglected to pay their rents, and his land was running waste for want of proper attention. It was impossible that he could be ignorant of the ruin which threatened him; yet he remained obstinately blind and inactive, till compelled to awaken from his lethargy, by the numerous demands of creditors, who had been put off from time to time, till their patience was exhausted, and they would be trifled with no longer.

Mr. Spencer, forced by their importunity to examine his affairs, found that, during the year which he had suffered to pass in idleness and inaction, debts had accumulated and expenses had been incurred, of which he knew nothing; and he found it impossible to defray them without mortgaging his estate, which, small as it was, he had wished to bequeath unincumbered to his daughter. But flattering himself that he might be able to redeem it for her, or that, if not, she would scarcely need so trifling a bequest, since she would doubtless be the heiress of the wealthy relative who had adopted her, he gave a mortgage to the guardians of a Mr. Dalkeith, a youth then under age, who was the owner of a fine estate adjoining.

Having satisfied the demands of his creditors, and dismissed the dishonest steward, who had so prodigally squandered and abused his property, he placed his affairs in the hands of a man whose probity was well known to him, and whom he could safely trust.

That home, which the endearments of happy love had made so delightful to him, was now become more dreary than a desert; and his most anxious wish was to escape from scenes, where every object reminded him of joys which were never more to return. He, therefore, quitted Ireland, and hastening to London, obtained through the intervention of friends the commission of an Ensign in the British army; and with the eagerness of one who seeks to drown the memory of the past in the novelty and activity of the present, he entered upon the scenes which opened before him,

For twelve years he continued attached to his profession; during which time he saw some active service abroad, and rose to the rank of Captain, in a regiment of foot. He was an excellent officer, and strict in the performance of his professional duty; but he was the gayest among his gay companions, and ever ready to join in their dissipated revels.

At length, however, a declining state of health obliged him to retire from the service, upon the allowance of half pay; and with feelings, habits, and a constitution entirely changed, he again sought the shelter of that retired home which had been the scene of his earliest and purest happiness. But time had blunted the acuteness of his feelings; and the emotions which remembrance of former days awakened, were quickly subdued, and he turned with interest to examine the state of his affairs, and look around for objects of pleasure and enjoyment. The convivial habits in which he had so long lived, rendered him averse to retirement, and made him every where a gay and welcome companion. He received and returned the visits of the neighbouring gentry; hunted with the sportsman; feasted with the epicure; complimented and flattered the ladies; discussed the affairs of the nation with the politician; talked of crops, tillage, and improvements with the agriculturalist; and, in short, he literally "became all things to all men."

The mortgage upon his estate had been partly paid; and by the lenity of the mortgagee, the term for the remainder of the payment was extended several years. Meanwhile, Mr. Spencer, inferring from the apparent indifference of Mr. Dalkeith, who had never yet visited his Irish possessions, that he would give himself no concern about the mortgage, whether it were ever cleared or not, thought best to make himself easy also. Indulging, therefore, the natural indolence of his disposition, he forgot the past, enjoyed the present, and looked forward with hope to the brilliant prospects of his daughter, who, as he and the world confidently expected, was to be the sole and undisputed heiress of her aunt's immense estate.

But the world, as well as individuals, is often mistaken. The old lady died; the will was opened, and the pitiful legacy of fifty pounds per annum, was all the bequest which fell to the portion of the young and lovely Marion! The bulk of the property was given to a crafty nephew, who had insinuated himself into the good graces of his credulous aunt; and taking advantage of an imbecile and broken mind, had persuaded her, that the honor of her family required that she should give her fortune to the only individual who inherited her name; and from whom it must descend to posterity through a line of beggars, or, dignified and supported as it ought to be, by the wealth which it was at her option to bequeath. The old lady could not resist this appeal to her family pride; the arguments of her selfish nephew prevailed; and the young and helpless Marion was thrown from the bosom of affluence and luxury into the arms of a father, whose declining health rendered it uncertain whether she would long continue to have a natural protector; and whose death must leave her exposed to all the evils of poverty and dependence.

Mr. Spencer was exceedingly incensed by the injustice of his relative, and his friends could with difficulty dissuade him from the intention, which in the first moment of angry disappointment, he adopted, of protesting against the equity and legality of the will. It must inevitably have engaged him in an expensive lawsuit; and at last terminated against him; for though the old lady was doubtless incapable of dictating her will at the time it was made, no positive proof could be adduced of her incapacity; since the attorney who wrote it, was one of her nephew's own creatures, and her only attendant besides Marion, was an artful woman, who had been bribed to say what she was bidden.

Convinced, at length, of the futility of his design, Mr. Spencer consented to relinquish it; and, though the disappointment ever after rankled in his heart, he hoped by an eligible match, to procure for his daughter a fortune equal to that which she had lost. Marion at this time was about fifteen; and as lovely and gay as youth,

beauty, and innocence could make her. She scarcely regretted the fortune which her father had expected for her ; but about which, for herself, she had neither care nor thought. She saw no good it had ever done her aunt ; on the contrary, it had encumbered her with servants, who were a constant source of perplexity ; and on her death-bed, it had rendered her the dupe of the artful and designing, who sought her, not to express their grief and affection, but to extort from her, even in the last moments of dissolving nature, that wealth, which through life had made her the object of their envy and hatred.

Marion was delighted with her present mode of life ; so different from what it had been in the gloomy and monotonous retirement of Calthorpe house, the residence of her aunt. She was touched by the tender affection of her father, which strikingly contrasted with the formal kindness of her stately relative ; and she was delighted to find a human being, into whose bosom she could pour out all the feelings of her innocent heart, and on whom she could lavish those endearments, which from infancy, she had been compelled, for the want of more sensible objects, to bestow on her dumb favorites. In her new home, too, though she was surrounded by less splendor, she found more comfort ; and the society which her father permitted her to enjoy, was so enlivening and delightful, that her buoyant spirits were in a state of constant excitement, and she was gayer than the birds which carolled around her.

She was the perfect image of her mother ; and this resemblance drew her closer to her father's heart. She seemed to have opened a new existence around him, and he often reproached himself for having lived so long without the solace and endearments of this darling girl. She occupied all his thoughts, and he cast his eyes round upon the circle of his acquaintance, to see if they could furnish one worthy to become her husband. But there was none who possessed all the requisites which he thought desirable ; none, at least, whose fortunes equalled his ambitious hopes ; and Marion was yet

young enough to wait a few years, in which time, he had no doubt, her loveliness would attract many admirers.

He sometimes thought of young Dalkeith, with whom a union would be highly advantageous. But he was reported to be so immersed in the pleasures of the gay world, and so inveterately prejudiced against Ireland, as to make it quite improbable that he would ever even visit his estate. Its management was solely entrusted to his steward; and it was whispered that the young man intended to dispose of it upon the death of his grandfather, who would not now permit an inch of the family possessions to go to a stranger.

When Marion reached her sixteenth year, the limited society which she had heretofore enjoyed, was pleasantly increased by the arrival of several officers, who were well known to her father, and who, with their regiment, were quartered in the immediate neighbourhood. It was at this period, that Captain O'Carroll, through the mediation of a brother officer, obtained an introduction to Miss Spencer. They were mutually impressed at the first interview; and frank, undisguised, and impassioned, it was not long before O'Carroll declared his love, and received from the artless Marion the assurance of a reciprocal affection.

Marion's choice was not exactly what her father's would have been for her; but Mr. Spencer could make no reasonable objection to the manly and honorable proposals of O'Carroll; and he did not refuse to give them the sanction of his consent; particularly since his precarious health rendered him anxious to provide a protector for his daughter, in case he should be taken from her. But notwithstanding this consideration certainly induced him to favor the wishes of O'Carroll, it would not, perhaps, have been of sufficient weight to obtain his consent, had he not learned from a friend of the Captain, that he was highly connected; and though without paternal fortune, was the destined heir of a rich uncle, already well advanced in years, and who would probably



soon leave his possessions to the care and enjoyment of his nephew.

Both Marion and O'Carroll loved with all the fervor of a first and youthful attachment. No petty jealousies, no coy reserves weakened their confidence, or disturbed the serenity of their enjoyment; and, in a dream of happiness, the days and weeks passed rapidly away. But this felicity was destined to receive a fatal interruption. Intelligence was received that Mr. Dalkeith was expected to visit his Irish estate; and, from that moment, Mr. Spencer began to regret the sanction he had given to O'Carroll's addresses, and to meditate in what manner he might separate the lovers, in case his daughter should be so fortunate as to attract the regards of young Dalkeith. He, however, remained silent for the present; unwilling to destroy the hopes of Marion till assured he could recompense her by prospects far more brilliant and alluring.

Dalkeith at length reached Ireland; and on the very day of his arrival, Mr. Spencer and Marion chanced to meet him in the course of an evening ramble. A fine dog that accompanied him, ran barking towards Marion, who, in order to avoid the animal, sprang upon a high bank which bounded one side of the narrow lane along which they were walking. Dalkeith called him off, rebuked him for his ferocity, and apologized, with well-bred politeness, for the unprovoked attack. This little occurrence served as an introduction between the gentlemen; and Mr. Spencer, anxious for the promotion of his secret hopes, to cultivate the acquaintance of Dalkeith, urged him to return home with them. The young man, struck by the beauty of Marion, unhesitatingly accepted the invitation, and exerted himself with such success to please, that both Mr. Spencer and his daughter were charmed with the easy affability of his manners, and with the elegance and versatility of his conversational powers.

Dalkeith really possessed a highly gifted mind, which a good education had taught him to value and improve; while a familiar intercourse with the world had given it

a polish which nature seldom bestows, and which it is impossible for study to impart. His personal appearance was by no means striking. He was tolerably well made, and rather above the middle height; his complexion was swarthy, and his features strongly marked, and expressive. Marion thought their expression bad; there was, in her opinion, a sinister meaning in his smile, and something fierce and cruel in the piercing glance of his jet-black eye; something, which often made her recoil, and reminded her of the deadly gaze of the basilisk, to which poets have ascribed so fatal and transforming a power. Mr. Spencer ridiculed these opinions of Marion as the foolish prejudices of a child, who shrinks from the mature countenance of manhood, and loves to see its own effeminacy reflected in the beardless cheek and laughing eye of the gay and blooming boy, while he contended that every thing noble, manly, and dignified was expressed in the countenance of Dalkeith.

From the evening of his first visit, the young man became a frequent guest at the house of Mr. Spencer. He was evidently touched by the charms of Marion; and even in the presence of her declared lover, he did not always restrain those attentions which but too plainly evinced the nature of his feelings. O'Carroll's jealousy was excited, and he regarded Dalkeith with an aversion which he did not attempt to conceal. Dalkeith, however, was too wary openly to observe it; but revenge and hatred rankled in his heart, and he resolved, at all hazards, to wrench the mistress of his affections from the arms of his contemptuous rival. He had sufficient penetration to discover what were the secret wishes of Mr. Spencer; and aware of his embarrassed situation, he determined to use the power which this circumstance gave him to his own advantage, and to the destruction of Captain O'Carroll's hopes.

He began by cautiously insinuating into Mr. Spencer's ear, that there was another heir, who intended to dispute with O'Carroll the right of succession to his uncle's estate, and who, it was believed by many, had the strongest legal claim. This was quite sufficient to de-

termine Mr. Spencer, though Dalkeith, to complete the ruin of his rival, whispered many scandalous falsehoods against his moral character; but all under an injunction of the strictest secrecy. He then declared his own affection for Marion, and professed his willingness, should Mr. Spencer accede to his proposals, to cancel all his debts, and even to give up the mortgage which he held upon his estate. Mr. Spencer's heart dilated with joy, as he listened to overtures so consonant with his most sanguine hopes; and he yielded an immediate and cordial assent. He however represented the necessity of prudence and caution, in breaking the connexion with O'Carroll, and bringing Marion to accede to their wishes. Intent only upon accomplishing this object, Mr. Spencer's manners became cold, constrained, and formally polite to O'Carroll, whose high spirit could by no means patiently brook this undeserved caprice; and while he treated Dalkeith, whom he knew to be the instigator of this change, with a haughty civility, which evinced his deep dislike of his person and designs, he assumed towards Mr. Spencer a manner, as proud and distant as his own, deeming it beneath him to ask the cause of this sudden coldness. He resolved, however, to secure the hand of Marion immediately, with her father's consent, if that could be obtained; and if not, to adopt clandestine measures, rather than trust her longer in the power of those, who, he suspected, were plotting to divide her from him.

But Mr. Spencer, in answer to his application, coldly informed him, that he could not yet consent to part with his daughter, nor did he think her old enough to perform the responsible duties of a wife and mistress of a family. O'Carroll, full of resentment, flew to Marion; and with the passionate energy of love and apprehension, urged her to revoke her father's cruel sentence. But she steadfastly refused him; her father, she said, had always studied her happiness, and she should henceforth be completely wretched, if she ventured to act clandestinely, and in direct opposition to his wishes and commands.

O'Carroll scarcely heard her through, when he burst forth into a torrent of invectives and reproaches; asserted that she no longer loved him, and that she concerted with her father to deceive and disappoint him. The gentle girl answered only with her tears; she felt the cruel injustice of her lover's accusations; but she knew, that in a cooler moment, he too, would be sensible of it; and that then the remorse of his own heart would be sufficiently agonizing, without the remembrance of her reproaches. O'Carroll, however, viewed her tears and her silence, as a tacit acknowledgment of indifference, and he quitted the house, angry with her, and indignant against himself, for loving one so fickle and inconstant.

For several days he absented himself from the society of Marion; and the circumstance was not suffered to pass unimproved by Mr. Spencer. He descanted upon it with affected surprise, and declared it to be an evidence of caprice, an instance of neglect, which argued little in favor of his excellence as a husband, and was absolutely unpardonable in a lover. Marion was wounded by her father's attempt to injure the man she loved, in her estimation; but she endured even this with meekness; and Mr. Spencer, finding that neither sarcasm nor censure was likely to effect his object, began to assume an air of depression; to speak of the embarrassed state of his affairs, and the darkness of his future prospects. Occasionally, and with apparent accident, the generosity of Mr. Dalkeith was praised; something that he had said or done, was mentioned with so much feeling and grateful admiration, that Marion began at length to believe he was in reality the sincere and disinterested friend that her father represented him. Under this impression, she endeavoured to subdue the prejudices, which O'Carroll had instilled into her mind against him; and unwilling to believe that his attentions to her were prompted by tender sentiments, since he knew she was the affianced wife of another, she treated him with a degree of cordiality which she felt due to the guest and friend of her father.

O'Carroll remarked it, and resolved to send Dalkeith an immediate challenge; but Talbot, his friend and adviser, dissuaded him from it, at present; at least, till he was assured beyond all doubt, of Dalkeith's designs, and of the alienation of Marion's affections. O'Carroll suffered himself to be prevailed upon; but passionate and suspicious, he interpreted every thing to Marion's disadvantage, and adopted towards her a course of conduct the least calculated to conciliate and secure her love. His visits were unfrequent, cold, and silent; and he seemed to shun every opportunity of conversing, or being alone with her.

Deeply hurt by this unkind caprice, and conscious that she gave him no cause for jealousy, she knew not how to account for it, unless she admitted the truth of her father's suggestion, that her lover was weary of the connexion and waited only for a favorable opportunity to dissolve it. Her pride, as well as her love was wounded by this idea; and she resolved to write, and release him from every obligation to her.

But Mr. Spencer knew too well the strength of O'Carroll's affection, and the cause of his seeming caprice, to permit this step, which, he was aware, would bring on an immediate explanation, and finally destroy the hopes, which he trusted soon to see consummated. He therefore proposed to Marion a journey to Dublin, which had several times been projected, and delayed on account of his ill health; but which he now felt able and desirous to prosecute. From that place, he said, she could if she chose, write to O'Carroll, and at the same time avoid the painful embarrassment of a personal interview. Marion, assured that her father studied only her happiness, and confiding in his judgment and experience, suffered herself to be prevailed upon, and the following morning was fixed for their departure. Mr. Spencer could not refuse his daughter's request; that Captain O'Carroll might be informed of their design; and he accordingly wrote a few cold lines signifying their intention, though he took care that the note should not be sent till the morning, when, even if in-

clined, O'Carroll would not have time for an interview before their departure. Marion did not know of this ; and all the evening her heart was full of the hope of once more seeing her lover ; but the evening passed away without bringing him, and it was not till they were in the very act of setting out, that his servant came with a short, formal note addressed to her father, merely wishing him a pleasant journey, and not so much as mentioning her name. Marion could not repress the tears, which gushed from her eyes ; she felt as if all the hopes of her future life were suddenly and cruelly blasted, and he, who, she fondly thought, would strew her path with flowers, had cruelly planted in her confiding heart, a barbed arrow, which no human hand could ever extract.

The journey was melancholy and unsocial. Marion could not conquer her sadness, and her father, after a few unsuccessful efforts to amuse her, suffered her to indulge it in silence. On their arrival in Dublin, Mr. Spencer took lodgings in a pleasant part of the city, and Marion was pleased to find herself in possession of retired apartments, and subject to no interruptions, except those which she herself wished. She was, however, greatly surprised on the following day, to learn that Mr. Dalkeith had arrived in the city, and exceedingly chagrined, when, after the residence of a week, she found herself the principal object of his attentions, and obliged, by the request of her father, to receive his daily visits. For some time, she submitted without opposition, to this necessity, particularly as indisposition had confined her to the house ever since her first arrival ; and Mr. Dalkeith, who read remarkably well, was at the pains to procure amusing books, and read them aloud, whenever she felt disposed to hear. But he gradually became familiar ; began to use the language of passion ; and at last explicitly avowed his affection, and entreated her to accept his suit. Without a moment's hesitation, she rejected it ; and when he continued his professions and entreaties, with a vehemence that shocked and alarmed her, she fled from his

presence, and besought her father to excuse her from receiving his visits, and to silence his importunity by telling him, it was impossible for her ever to accept his addresses.

Mr. Spencer, at this avowal, assumed an air of extreme seriousness; and after a few moments of agitated silence, informed her he was a ruined man; that the mortgage upon his estate had expired, and since he was unable to redeem it, the place must be forfeited to the mortgagee. Mr. Dalkeith, he said, had generously desired him to reside upon it as if it were still his own; but this offer he could not accept; since it would impose upon him an obligation which he never could repay. He was already, he added, too deeply indebted to the kindness of Mr. Dalkeith, though he should not have accepted so many favors, had he not hoped one day to reward him with the affections of his child, the only recompense which his noble friend coveted.

Marion remained silent and in tears; and though her father had greatly wrought upon her feelings, she could not prevail upon herself to pronounce a consent, which would destroy the last feeble hope that still bound her to O'Carroll. But the theme was daily renewed; Dalkeith affected great unhappiness, and Mr. Spencer appeared perfectly miserable. Marion was not formed for resistance or contention; and she at last yielded a reluctant consent to her father's wishes. This object gained, the next was to dissolve the connexion which still existed with Captain O'Carroll; for Marion had not yet found courage to write to him herself, and she was unwilling to transfer the execution of the task to her father. But renouncing the last secret and cherished hope, she no longer opposed his proposition, but suffered him to write whatever he chose, and only at his urgent request, added a few lines to confirm what he had written. As with a trembling hand she signed this renunciation of all her dearest hopes, she felt as if there was no longer an object worth living for; and from that moment she sunk into a state of melancholy abstraction, from which no efforts could arouse her.

Mr. Dalkeith, however, seemed resolved that neither coldness, indifference, nor absolute aversion, should weigh aught against the accomplishment of his wishes ; and he was so assiduous in his attentions, so gross in his flattery, and so urgent with her to hasten the period of his happiness, that the esteem which she had sought to cherish for him, was changed into disgust ; and she felt daily more reluctant to unite her fate with a man, who was in every respect so repugnant to her. She even thought it a sin, though from motives of filial duty and affection, to accede to this connexion ; and she resolved to speak again with her father on the subject, and frankly to confess, how miserable the thought of such an alliance made her. One evening, when Dalkeith had gone for a couple of days into the country, she was sitting alone with her father ; and anxious to improve so good an opportunity, she was on the point of introducing the subject which weighed heavily on her heart, when the entrance of a servant with a letter, interrupted her ; and glad, even of this short reprieve, she strove while her father was reading it, to gain all the resolution which she felt necessary to support her. But she was soon drawn from her own sad meditations by the emotion of her father. His color rapidly varied, his lips were strongly compressed, and when he had perused the letter, he threw it from him with an execration of deep resentment, and rising, traversed the apartment in excessive agitation.

Marion was alarmed, and ventured to ask the cause of his disturbance. At the sound of her voice, he turned towards her, the stern expression of his countenance softened into tenderness, and clasping her in his arms, he exclaimed,

“My child, I had thrust you to the brink of a fearful precipice ; but heaven has mercifully interposed to save you from destruction. Read that letter, and shudder at the arts of the basest villain that ever disgraced the name of man.”

He quitted the room abruptly as he finished, and Ma-



tion taking up the letter, read with surprise the following words,

“ To Edward Spencer, Esq.

“ Sir,

“ I write to inform you, that you have been grossly and infamously imposed upon, by as daring a villain as ever escaped the gibbet ; and I sincerely hope this may reach you, before he has accomplished his wicked designs, and made you the dupe of his artifice.

“ I, sir, Sedly Dalkeith, am the true owner of Ellisland, the estate which adjoins your own ; and this man, who has had the audacity to impose himself upon you and others, for me, though he bears my name, and is, I blush to acknowledge it, connected with me by the ties of consanguinity, is neither trusted nor esteemed by me. I sent him to my Irish estate, rather to be rid of his society than for any other motive ; though I should have been more cautious had I supposed him capable of the unpardonable baseness which he has practised. Availing himself of the circumstance, that my person was known to no one at or near Ellisland, he connived with my agent (who, I find, has been enriching himself at my expense, and practising upon me, for years, a series of the basest deceptions), to impose upon all who were credulous enough to believe him, in order to receive, during his residence at Ellisland, the honors of its landlord, and those other attentions, which, in his own character, he knew it would be useless to expect.

“ The strongest inducement, however, which led him to adopt this conduct, I understand to have arisen from a violent passion which he conceived, at first sight, for a daughter of yours, sir, and which he perhaps imagined would not prove less successful, if urged by one possessed of wealth, rank, and some influence in society. I sincerely wish you more happiness, than to see your daughter wedded to this wretch, who has already a wife and child that he neglects, and leaves to the bounty of those who are humane enough to support them.

"These particulars I have just learned from one of my tenants, who by some means became possessed of the secret, and was just and honest enough to hasten directly to me with information of the proceedings which threatened to involve you, sir, in wretchedness, and me in shame and disgrace. The disgust which I before had to Ireland, is increased by these circumstances, and they have determined me, the moment I can find a purchaser, to part with every rood of the inheritance which has descended to me from my Irish ancestors; though still I shall be a loser, as this *trusty* cousin of mine has lined his pouch with my gold, and imposed even upon my crafty agent, with the tale, that I had commissioned him to receive my rents, and manage my property as he chose. I hope yet to chastise him as he deserves, and I promise him, that, besides my private reproof, the weighty arm of the law shall take cognizance of the impostor and embezzler of other people's property.

"With respect, sir, I remain your humble and obedient servant,

"SEDLY DALKEITH."

Marion was overwhelmed with conflicting emotions, as she perused this letter; but joy and gratitude predominated; and she raised her heart in devout thankfulness to Heaven, for its timely and merciful interposition. But, as she was in the act of rising from the table at which she had been sitting, she saw the figure of the base Dalkeith reflected in the mirror opposite to her. Having returned unexpectedly from the country, he had entered the apartment unobserved, and seeing Marion deeply engaged in perusing a letter, which he suspected was from O'Carroll, he stole softly behind her, and leaned over her shoulder to read its contents.

Marion, when she perceived him, started up with an involuntary shudder of abhorrence; and while the natural softness and timidity of her character gave place to the lofty courage of insulted virtue, she looked steadfastly and sternly upon him, and said, in a firm voice,

"False and artful man! why are you here? why do you come to pollute us with your wicked presence? We know all;" and she pointed to the letter; "and you too have learned the vengeance which is denounced against you. Go, then, and ask forgiveness of God, before the offended laws of your country cut short the space which is yet left you for repentance."

Her

"grave rebuke

Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
Invincible."

And as the father of evil shrunk abashed at the reproof of the virtuous cherub; so the guilty Dalkeith stood silent, paler than death, and motionless as a statue; while the soft voice of the injured and gentle Marion, fell with all the startling force of awful and severe truth upon his alarmed conscience. Without reply, he turned from her; stripped of his disguise, and abashed by her virtuous superiority, he could no longer support even his insolence, and he passed hastily out, just as Mr. Spencer entered through an opposite door. Marion's transient energy then forsook her; and sinking into a chair, she wept without restraint or interruption; for her father understood her feelings too well to attempt the hopeless task of soothing them in this first moment of overwhelming emotion and excitement.

He waited patiently till the first burst of feeling had subsided, and when she became comparatively calm, he began to speak of the arrangements which he had made for their departure. He wished to escape from observation and inquiry, before the affair obtained publicity. Deeply mortified by the imposition which had been practised upon him, and humbled by the consciousness of his own unworthy conduct, he was ashamed to meet any of his former friends, or to behold a face that had ever regarded him with confidence and respect. Reduced, too, by the loss of his estate to almost absolute penury, he cared not how profound was the retirement in which he intended to bury himself; and he now informed Marion, that he should quit Dublin early in the

morning for —, a small hamlet on the borders of Lake Killarney, where, when a boy, he had spent much happy time, and where, if he could find a habitation that was comfortable, and suited his limited income, he designed, for the present at least, to locate himself.

Marion assented with a sigh. She could no longer entertain a doubt that O'Carroll's affections were entirely alienated from her, and all places were alike indifferent to her; or, if she had any preference, it was for that where the most profound solitude reigned, and where, without interruption, she might indulge her regrets, and cherish the memory of the past. At all events she was glad to quit the scene of gaiety and fashion which she found so uncongenial with her present feelings, and she retired early to rest, in order that she might be prepared to commence her journey with the first dawn of light on the following morning.

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## CHAPTER XV.

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will."

*Shakspeare.*

No living creature was stirring in the streets of Dublin, when, early on the ensuing morning, Mr. Spencer and his daughter commenced their solitary journey. It was as melancholy as it was lonely; for they had both suffered too much by the disappointment of their fondest hope, to indulge any but sad and gloomy meditations, which there was nothing in the prospect of the future to brighten, nor in the remembrance of the past to render less keen and agonizing. The place towards which they were journeying, was calculated to deepen and increase these sombre feelings; for it was secluded from all in-

terecourse with the world, and inhabited only by a few poor fishermen, whose cabins skirted the margin of the lake.

Among these humble abodes was one, distinguished by its superior neatness and convenience, in which dwelt Patrick M'Allister, an ancient man, who had formerly been a servant in the family of Mr. Spencer's father. His attachment to his *young master*, as he still termed Mr. Spencer, remained as ardent and devoted as ever.

Before his marriage, Mr. Spencer had been accustomed to pass some weeks in the course of every summer in this retired spot. The neat dwelling of Patrick, carefully managed by a widowed daughter, his only companion,—his pretty garden, sloping to the lake, and gay with the brightest flowers of the season, evinced, either that nature had inspired M'Allister with a love of neatness and order, superior to that which is commonly found to mark the character of the Irish peasantry; or else that the regularity, the comfort, and cleanliness, which reigned in the household where his youth was passed, had given him a lesson, which was now carried into practical effect, and not only made him respectable in the eyes of his poor neighbours, but contributed greatly to his own comfort and enjoyment.

Here, under the name of Stanley, Mr. Spencer and his daughter took up their abode, to the great delight of their humble friends, who relinquished the best rooms in the cottage to their sole use, and made it their study, as far as their limited means would permit, to provide for the ease and enjoyment of their guests. Marion's constitution was invigorated by the pure air and healthful exercise which she here enjoyed; and though her mind had lost its wonted tone of gaiety, a soft and pleasing melancholy soon usurped the place of that deep and bitter anguish which had preyed upon it during the first weeks of her abode in this sequestered spot. She was left much alone; for her father's temper was rendered morose and misanthropic by his misfortunes; and he would often pass whole days in the woods; or, in a

small skiff, which he guided himself, he floated on the calm lake hour after hour, in a state of dreamy abstraction and indifference. Sometimes he mounted his horse, and giving him the rein, suffered him to take what course he chose; nor stopped till compelled by the calls of hunger, or the languor of excessive weariness; and then, he was often so far from home, that his absence was necessarily prolonged to two, and sometimes three days, before he could again return to it. At first these wanderings occasioned Marion great uneasiness; but she soon became accustomed to them; and her solitude was beguiled by the exercise of such accomplishments as she was mistress of, and by the perusal of the few books which she had brought with her from Ulster. Dorothy, too, the daughter of Patrick, or Dory, as she was called, by way of abbreviation, contributed as far as was in her power, to the amusement of her young guest. She repeated the marvellous legends of her country; gathered for her the rarest flowers and mosses; and pointed out to her the pleasantest and most sequestered walks.

• Thus passed away nine months; and all the intelligence which reached the fugitives of what was passing in the world, was obtained through the medium of a newspaper, which Patrick's interest in public events, (for in his youth he had been quite a politician), induced him to take.

Its columns were at this period filled with accounts of the American *rebellion*, as it was termed, and with the animated discussions of parliament on the merits and demerits of the cause. Mr. Spencer, by reading these debates, began to feel a deep interest in the subject; and though, for a time, uncertain which side of the quarrel to espouse, he was finally decided by the overpowering eloquence of the great Chatham and his brilliant compeers.

We will not deny that the jaundiced and disordered feelings of Mr. Spencer's mind, urged him to declare in favor of those who in a distant land were struggling for liberty and independence; for he had not that instinctive sense of right and wrong, which leads many superior

minds to form a correct judgment, uninfluenced by selfish considerations. He was always more or less guided by selfish principles ; and though, in this instance, the arguments of statesmen whom he revered and admired, had certainly impressed him with a conviction, that the American cause was just and upright, we cannot assert that he would ever have espoused it, had his situation been other than it was. But he felt himself an outcast from society, stripped of his natural inheritance, and dependent on the bounty of his country for the scanty pittance which barely furnished him the common necessities of life. A new career seemed open to him in America ; there merit was exalted, and those who distinguished themselves by it, were raised to offices of power and profit.

He owed nothing to that country, which left him to languish in poverty and obscurity, the remnant of a life, whose best years had been spent in her service ; and without longer deliberation he determined to repair to America, and join the standard of the republican cause.

This resolution was no sooner adopted, than, with the restlessness of an unhappy mind, he felt impatient to carry it into execution. Marion made not the least opposition to her father's design. There was nothing to bind her to Ireland ; not even the idea that Captain O'Carroll still breathed its air, and trod upon its soil ; for she had seen by the paper, three months before, that his regiment had embarked for America, the land to which her father wished to go, and where, perhaps, she might once more behold him.

Patrick M'Allister died about this time, and Dory stripped of her last surviving relative, entreated permission to accompany Marion, for whom she had imbibed a strong attachment. Mr. Spencer was pleased with the proposal, and gladly acceded to it ; rejoiced to procure for his daughter an attendant, of whose honesty he was assured, and to whose care and affection he could confidently entrust her. Dory therefore disposed of the little property left her by her father ; and all things being in readiness for their departure, they took passage

from Cork, on board a merchant vessel, ostensibly bound to Holland on a trading voyage ; but in reality destined for America, with a freight of patriots, eager to take part in the glorious revolution which was agitating the New World ; and on the progress of which, the eyes of all nations were fixed with wonder and expectation.

Their voyage was short and safe, notwithstanding the dangers to which at such a time it was necessarily exposed. They landed at New York towards the close of May, not quite a year after the memorable battle of Bunker's hill ; the accounts of which had first kindled the fire of enthusiasm in Mr. Spencer's heart, and awakened his interest in the cause which was so nobly defended. He still retained the name of Stanley ; and his insinuating manners, the attestations which he produced of his former rank, in the British army and of his courage and intrepidity while in the service, together with the ardor he evinced to engage in the American cause, procured him a rank corresponding to that which he had sustained in the royal army. Hope seemed once again to smile upon his path ; and Marion, happy in beholding her father restored to cheerfulness, and united again with the world and its pursuits, thought less of her own sorrows, and began to catch a beam from his returning gaiety, to brighten the darkness of her mind. She remained in New York, till the arrival of both General and Admiral Howe, with large reinforcements of British troops, that were landed on Long Island. An attack upon the city was of course expected ; and all was bustle and preparation, in the American camp.

The timid Marion, brought up in the most profound retirement, was filled with alarm at the idea of her father's danger in the bloody contest, which was on the eve of taking place. He saw her uneasiness ; and anxious to remove her from the scene of strife, gladly accepted the offer of a lady, who was going to Philadelphia, and proposed taking Marion with her. Marion felt reluctant to remove so far from her father ; but his entreaties prevailed ; and with Dory, she accompanied



the lady to Philadelphia, which as yet remained a place of safety and quiet. Here she might have been happy ; for she received every kindness and attention in the power of friendship to bestow ; but anxiety for her father's safety rendered her incapable of comfort or enjoyment. At length, however, she received a few lines from him, written in haste, after the battle of Long Island. The Americans had been defeated ; but he was safe and unhurt ; and Marion's wonted tranquillity was restored.

But soon, the rumors which reached her of continual engagements, of the retreat of the Americans, and the victorious pursuit of the British, awakened all her fears and kept her in a state of continual anxiety and alarm. As the contending parties drew nearer to Philadelphia, many families, alarmed for their safety, hastened to quit the city ; and among others, was that in which Marion resided. She resisted their entreaties to accompany them ; every fear of personal danger or inconvenience, was lost in the hope of again seeing her father ; and she willingly acceded to Dory's proposal, that they should take lodgings with a kinswoman of her's, who kept a small shop in an obscure street of the city. To this humble abode they removed ; and here they remained, till the gallant remnant of the Americans was driven beyond the Delaware ; when Marion was repaid for all her suffering and anxiety, by being again pressed with tenderness to the bosom of her father. She now saw him often ; though his visits were short, as the situation of the army demanded the vigilance and activity of every individual attached to it. But to know that he was near her, and not at present exposed to danger, was a source of inexpressible consolation to her.

Colonel Grahame, for whom her father had formed a particular friendship, was almost the only person whom she saw in her retirement ; and for him she early imbibed the affection of a sister, and experienced a calm pleasure in his society, which it was long since she had derived from that of any other individual.

One day her father came to her with an anxious

countenance, and an air of extreme dejection, and informed her that he had accidentally seen Mr. Dalkeith, on the preceding day, who instantly recognised him, and before it was in his power to avoid him, accosted him, and entered into conversation. Dalkeith reproached him bitterly for taking away his daughter, at the very moment when she had given her promise to become his, and declared half the contents of the letter which occasioned this flight to be false. In the first place, he said, it was not true that he had a wife; and though he confessed he had assumed his cousin's character, he did it in perfect jest; and intended on the following day to have explained to Mr. Spencer. He declared he had not embezzled any property; that his kinsman had long been in his debt; and he felt justified in taking his lawful dues, whenever he could find an opportunity. He then entreated permission to renew his suit to Marion, which request Mr. Spencer rejected with disdain; rebuked him for having so long imposed upon him; and desired, that henceforth, whenever they should chance to meet, it might be only as strangers. Dalkeith parted from him in extreme anger, muttering vengeance as he went; and Mr. Spencer was alarmed lest he should discover the place of Marion's retreat, and execute his threat by forcing her away with him.

Marion sought to calm her father's fears, by promising to seclude herself from all observation; but Mr. Spencer remained extremely anxious and uneasy, till she consented to quit the city, and remove to a solitary farm-house, which was occupied by an acquaintance and countrywoman of Dory's cousin.

Dalkeith, in the mean time, made every attempt to discover her; but the seclusion of her new abode baffled all his efforts; and irritated by the disappointment, he resolved, since Marion had escaped his power, to make Mr. Spencer suffer for the scorn with which he had treated him. He wished to effect his immediate ruin; and in order to it, he ventured to take a daring and decisive step. He resolved to excite suspicions of the unfortunate man's fidelity: and he therefore forged a

letter to Mr. Spencer, in which he addressed him in the character of a British officer; artfully expressed approbation of the zeal and vigilance with which he had executed their commissions; hinted slightly at the reward which was to be the fruit of his fidelity; and concluded by recommending secrecy and caution. This was all expressed in so artful and ambiguous a manner, that though easily comprehended, it still seemed designed only for the secret understanding of him to whom it was directed. This fatal letter the base Dalkeith contrived to drop, where he knew it would shortly be discovered by those who would take alarm at its contents. His stratagem succeeded. The letter was found by a corporal, who disliked Mr. Spencer, because he had once reproved him for some irregularity; and only a few days before, had threatened to have him punished for intoxication. This man carried the letter directly to a superior officer; suspicion was strongly awakened, and the unhappy Spencer was placed under arrest.

He well knew the hand which had brought this evil upon him; but he was vexed, mortified, and humbled, that the malicious insinuations of an anonymous letter, should receive such easy credence, and be suffered to weigh so heavily against the zeal, the fidelity, the constancy, with which he had served the republican cause. All his ambitious schemes were at once overthrown; all his new formed hopes, forever blasted. He saw himself an outcast from society; alienated from every thing which made life sweet and desirable; and condemned to terminate the career, which he had so auspiciously commenced, by a death of shame and ignominy. Disgusted with mankind, and weary of a world, where he encountered only disappointment and misfortune, he cared not, for himself, how soon his days were finished; but for his Marion's sake, he would yet consent to live, and avoid, if possible, the miserable fate which threatened him. Not a hope, however, of an honorable acquittal was held forth to cheer him. The evidence was believed to be strong against him. He

was a stranger; and though his conduct had appeared unexceptionable, since he attached himself to the republican cause, it was impossible to know if he were really actuated by those principles which he avowed; or if, as the letter evinced, he was actually in the pay and employment of the enemy.

Conscious of his innocence and integrity, Mr. Spencer was indignant at the coldness and suspicion, which the unsupported insinuations of a stranger excited against him. Disappointment, anger, and chagrin embittered every feeling of his heart; his very nature seemed changed, and he became gloomy, morose, and misanthropic. He resolved, should he escape even with honor to himself, to fly from mankind, and spend the remnant of his unfortunate life remote from every thing which could remind him of humanity.

Colonel Grahame was almost the only one who believed him innocent; but he thought his situation desperate, and he would not delude him with hopes, which he feared would never be realized. Traitors were around and amongst them; and the dauntless band, who were warring against a host for liberty and life, could not, with safety to their cause, permit an individual over whom the breath of suspicion had passed, however slightly, to remain longer among them.

Without detailing the particulars of those events, which occurred previous to his quitting Ireland, Mr. Spencer informed Colonel Grahame of his rencontre with Dalkeith, mentioning him only as a man, from whom he had received much injury, and who still continued to persecute him from motives of revenge; and declared that he could not entertain a doubt of this man's being the author of the infamous letter, which had occasioned his present misfortunes.

Grahame, not wishing to pry into Mr. Spencer's secret history, and perceiving that he was not inclined to enter into detail, heard the intelligence respecting Dalkeith, without any other remark than that the man ought to be apprehended; as his examination might tend to exculpate the accused. Mr. Spencer knew not where

he was to be found ; but he gave a minute description of his person, and mentioned the name by which he had known him in Ireland ; though he thought it very possible that he might have adopted another in this country.

When Colonel Grahame afterwards heard Captain O'Carroll speak of a Mr. Dalkeith, as his rival in the affections of Marion Spencer, it never once occurred to him, that this lurking villain, who from the basest motives sought to destroy both the life and character of Mr. Stanley, could be the same, any more than he supposed that Marion Spencer, the lost and lamented object of his friend O'Carroll's love, was the same as Marion Stanley the dejected, exiled, and forlorn girl, who seemed to feel her very life a burden, and to have crushed in the bud those cheering hopes and expectations, which gladden the dawn of youth, and render it so joyous and delightful.

The Colonel caused strict search to be made after Dalkeith ; but he was no where to be found. Suspecting his presence might be called for at the trial, since he was conscious that Mr. Spencer would name him, as the author of the anonymous letter ; and unwilling to be confronted by the man, who could so easily convict him of villainy, he quitted the city privately and repaired to Albany ; where he fixed his present residence, under the assumed name of Forrester. It was the second time he had changed it since he quitted Ireland ; from which country he had been compelled to fly, in order to escape the justice of its offended laws.

Immediately on learning that the deception which he had practised to obtain possession of Miss Spencer's hand was discovered, he returned secretly to Ulster, to consult with his cousin's agent, on the course which it was best for them to pursue, as well as to obtain his part of the spoil which they had fleeced from the estate, and agreed to share together. He found, on his arrival, that Ellisland was already disposed of, and the agent had withdrawn from the neighbourhood ; but Dalkeith easily found him, as he was informed of the place to which

his *worthy partner* intended to retire, in case of a premature discovery. In the course of his settlement, however, with the iniquitous agent, they disagreed upon some trifling points; high words ensued; and like a true coward, as he was, Dalkeith struck his companion a violent blow. It was returned with equal fury, and a close combat ensued, which terminated in the defeat of the agent, who no sooner fell bloody and lifeless to the ground, than Dalkeith made his escape with all the spoil, leaving his opponent senseless, in which situation he remained till death terminated his wicked life. Dalkeith, after skulking from one hiding-place to another for several weeks, contrived to escape in disguise from the country; and finally succeeded in getting to America; where he had resided a number of months previous to Mr. Spencer's arrival. He remained in Philadelphia, apparently a peaceable and well disposed citizen, till his rencontre with Mr. Spencer; when, as we before observed, apprehending unpleasant consequences from an examination of his person and character, and satisfied that the stratagem of the letter had succeeded, he repaired with all haste to Albany; where he was residing at the period of his first introduction to our readers.

Mr. Spencer remained under arrest till the evening of the attack upon Trenton; and though a few brief days only had passed away, they seemed to him more tedious than the lapse of months. He brooded over his injuries till resentment deepened into hatred; and in the bitterness of his heart, he cursed mankind, and wished that instant death might come to end at once his shame and misery. But then came the remembrance of his poor deserted Marion; and life seemed still worth preserving for her sake; yet, if he remained a prisoner, it must be inevitably forfeited. He looked around him;—were there no means of escape! and if there were, why should he not fly? It might, perhaps, be considered an evidence of guilt; but his heart felt its own innocence; and why should he regard the opinions of a world which was full of ingratitude and caprice? He wished only to fly

from it, and in profound solitude to bury his sorrows and his existence.

As these reflections agitated his mind, the sentinel cautiously entered his apartment. He was an Irishman, and had served as a soldier under Mr. Spencer while in the British army. His honest features were full of compassion, as he spoke of Mr. Spencer's former kindness, and mentioned, with unaffected sorrow, his present forlorn situation. When he had given brief utterance to his grateful feelings, he produced a cloak, and entreated that Mr. Spencer would put it on, and follow him without delay. He declared there was no hope for him if he remained; but if he would yield himself to his guidance, he would conduct him off in safety. The soldier added, that, though he liked the service of the Americans, he was willing, for the sake of saving the life of one who had treated him with such kindness, to return to that of the king.

It was no time for deliberation; indeed Mr. Spencer's previous reflections had determined him; and throwing the soldier's cloak over his dress, he followed his generous conductor in silence. The night was dark and stormy, and the departure of the troops had occasioned universal excitement and confusion; so that the flight of the fugitives was attended with comparatively little difficulty or danger.

Mr. Spencer expressed a wish to repair to the farmhouse where his daughter lodged; and they accordingly bent their course in that direction. After a tedious march of several hours, through intricate by-paths, slippery with snow and ice, they reached the desired haven. Its inmates had long been buried in sleep; but they were soon aroused; and Marion's joy was excessive, when she learned that her father was the cause of this nocturnal disturbance; though it was cruelly damped by grief and alarm, when the cause of his sudden appearance was explained to her.

The soldier staid but a moment to refresh himself; and refusing with honest pride the bounty which Mr.

Spencer pressed upon him, he departed under cover of the night to gain the British encampments.

The mistress of the farm-house was an Irishwoman; and though she had married an American, she still retained a strong affection for her country, and all that appertained to it. Even the attachments which she had formed, and the comforts she enjoyed in her adopted land, had not been able to wean her affections from that of her birth; and the "*bit shealing*," where in her early days she had slept with the pigs, and lived upon butter-milk and potatoes, was still spoken of with fond regret; as if, with all its inconveniences, it was far dearer than the comparatively commodious dwelling which the thriving industry of her husband had left at her disposal, together with the means of comfortable support for herself and two children. He, with that ardor which at this period characterized the sturdy yeomanry of America, had entered into the service of his country, and fallen in the first engagement which occurred after he had exchanged the ploughshare for the sword; and it was now the first desire of his widow to return to her native land, though she felt, that, in the present state of the times this wish was impracticable without the sacrifice of all her little property; and she therefore relinquished it for the present. She lived in a spot so secluded that the face of a stranger was seldom seen near her dwelling; and both from the pleasure of obliging a countrywoman, and a fondness for society, she was induced, at the request of Dory's cousin, to receive Marion and her attendant into her family. The affection which she shortly imbibed for the gentle Marion, caused her to rejoice when Mr. Spencer was added to her household; and though unacquainted with the circumstances which drove him to seek the shelter of her house, she knew that for some reason he was desirous to secrete himself from the Americans; and she was as solicitous as he could wish, to conceal him from observation or inquiry. She endeavoured to persuade him that his present residence was perfectly secure; that it was not probable he



could be sought after there ; and even if he was, she could find means to hide him from his pursuers.

Mr. Spencer would have been persuaded by her arguments to trust himself beneath her roof ; so he seemed incapable of effort or resistance. A fatal lethargy was creeping over him, which excited the alarm of Marion, and aroused in her that latent energy which lay hid beneath the softness of her character. She represented to him the danger of remaining so near the American army ; and urged him with all the eloquence of anxious affection, to seek for safety in a more remote spot, even though he should be compelled to leave her behind him. Whither could he go ? was his desponding question ; and the woman, touched by their distress, informed them of a deserted cottage, where, during the first year of her marriage, she had resided with her husband. Ruinous as it was, he had disposed of it to a younger brother, who proposed to repair and inhabit it. But soon after the war broke out, he went off, and was killed ; so the place remained exactly as it was, though it might, perhaps, afford a temporary shelter ; and nobody, she was sure, would think of going near it ; for it was an out-of-the-way place, and his Honor was truly welcome, if he would condescend to live in it till the hunt of him was over.

Mr. Spencer, aroused by the arguments of his daughter, to all the peril of his present situation, consented to occupy this ruined tenement till the pursuit was ended ; and he could with safety attempt an escape from the country. Dory, with the assistance of their hostess, was commissioned to provide such necessaries as were indispensable to their comfort ; and the next evening, conducted by the son of their landlady, a boy of nine years, the fugitives were to seek their new abode. It was five or six miles distant ; but the road was retired, and the little poney that was to draw them in a light cart, was fleet and sure of foot ; so that, with proper disguises, there was reason to hope they might reach the place of their destination in safety.

The whole of the night on which Mr. Spencer arrived at the farm house, was consumed in these consultations; and morning dawned before the final decision was made. It was then too late to execute their plan before the return of night should veil their removal from observation. But that day might produce a discovery! Marion trembled at the thought; though her father, without evincing much uneasiness, retired to pass the hours till night, in a sort of garret, under the eaves of the house, to which he was conducted by his landlady, as a place of perfect safety. And, indeed, when Marion saw the apartment, if such it could be called, her apprehensions were sensibly lessened.

The only entrance to it was through a small scuttle door, imperceptible to a common observer, among the smoky rafters of the kitchen; and the gloomy garret itself was filled with empty barrels and rubbish of every description; and enlightened only by a faint ray which gleamed through a single pane of glass, curtained with cobwebs, and stained with the undisturbed dust of years. The ladder by which Mr. Spenceer and Marion (for she would not be separated from her father), ascended to this dismal attic was removed from sight the moment they had entered, the scuttle let down and cautiously secured, while, the better to conceal it from observation, a goodly row of squashes ~~was~~ suspended from it, intermixed with seed cucumbers, and garnished with sundry strings of dried apples; all which hung as quietly as if this had been their unmolested situation, since they were first gathered from their stalks.

Her master and young mistress thus snugly disposed of, Dory enveloped herself in a cloak, hood, and abundance of other garments, in order to enlarge her gaunt figure, lest she should be recognised by any individual who had known her during her short residence in the city, and trudged off to visit her kinswoman, and purchase from her small shop such articles as they should probably require in their sequestered abode. The good woman of the house was also occupied at home, in preparing such things as she could best spare for the con-

venience and accommodation of her unfortunate lodgers; though Mr. Spenceer had refused to accept the smallest service until she consented to accept a sufficient remuneration for her kindness.

In the mean time the day passed on without any alarm; the hour of noon arrived, and the hostess was about to serve up her frugal dinner, when she was startled by a loud scream from Marion, and a noise, as of some one falling, in the little loft above. Hastily replacing the ladder, she ascended to learn the cause of the alarm; and by the faint light which gleamed through the diminutive window, she perceived Mr. Spencer lying senseless on the floor, the blood gushing from his mouth, and Marion kneeling beside him, wringing her hands, and sobbing aloud.

Unable longer to subdue the despair and anguish occasioned by his desperate situation, Mr. Spencer no sooner found himself alone with his daughter, than he yielded to the most passionate emotion; and pacing with distracted steps, the darkened and confused place, where, like a guilty wretch, he was lurking to avoid mankind, he wrought himself into a paroxysm of anguish too bitter for endurance; his feeble frame could not sustain it; and in the extremity of mental suffering, he burst a blood vessel, and for a short space forgot his sorrows in insensibility.

The humane hostess sought to offer consolation to the afflicted Marion; but her clamorous grief refused to listen to any thing which sounded like hope or comfort; and finding that her attempts rather increased the poor girl's sorrow, the landlady busied herself in preparing for the better accommodation of her unfortunate guest. With the assistance of Dory, who fortunately returned just at this time, she raised a straw bed through the scuttle, and having cleared a corner of the loft, placed it upon a crazy bedstead, which chanced to be stowed away among other kinds of litter. She then spread it with clean, but coarse sheets; and gently raising Mr. Spenceer from the floor, they laid him upon the bed. Marion protested against sending for a physician, which would

be the means of betraying them to their enemies; and as Dory was familiar with her father's disorder, she professed herself willing to trust to her skill and experience. The plan of their removal was, of course, defeated for the present; but Marion, occupied solely with her father, almost forgot the fears which had so much agitated her on his first arrival; and when she thought of the possibility of a discovery, she thought also, that, even should it occur, no human being could be unfeeling enough to disturb him in his present situation. He gradually recovered strength, though to all but Marion, the expectation of his return to health seemed idle and delusive.

Nearly a month passed away in this manner; and their retreat still remained undisturbed. Dory, who occasionally visited her kinswoman, learned from her, that rewards had been offered for the apprehension of Mr. Stanley, and that the search was for sometime conducted with great diligence; but proving unsuccessful, it was thought he had escaped from the country, and the pursuit was given over. This intelligence, and the assurance which Dory received from her cousin that there was too much fighting to think of looking after a run-away prisoner, made both Marion and her father comparatively easy. Mr. Spencer's apartment, too, had been rendered more habitable by the removal of much that had encumbered it; and the money which he had brought with him from Ireland, had hitherto, and would yet for some time continue to supply their wants, without encroaching on Dory's little store, which with warm-hearted generosity she daily pressed upon them. But Mr. Spencer hoped, before reduced to that necessity, to be in some situation where he could gain a support, or at least, where he might without danger, write to a friend, through whom Marion's annuity was to be remitted to him.

As her father recovered strength, Marion, no longer sustained by the effort which she felt compelled to make during his extreme illness, seemed to droop in health and spirits; and fearing that her close confinement wa

injurions, her father often urged her 'to walk near the house; for so long a time had elapsed since his escape, that he apprehended little or nothing from the danger of discovery. For sometime she resisted his entreaties, reluctant to quit the apartment whose gloom was so congenial with her feelings; but at length she was one evening tempted by the mildness of the atmosphere, and the brilliancy of a cloudless sunset to walk abroad, and for the first time since her father's illness, breathe the pure air of heaven, and look around upon the fair face of nature. She had thought that it could never more yield her pleasure; but there are few pure hearts how deeply soever depressed by suffering, over which the loveliness of a serene sky has not a cheering and reviving influence. Marion felt its power; even in wintry desolation she thought it beautiful; and yielding to the sweetly painful remembrances, which it awoke, she strayed along the silent path heedless of the distance she had gone, till the sound of horses' feet disturbed her reverie; and looking up with a face of terror, she perceived an American officer attentively regarding her, as he rode slowly along a straggling road, which she had unconsciously approached. It was Colonel Grahame, on his return from visiting a poor soldier, who had lost his leg in one of the last engagements, and been permitted to return home in consequence.

Marion's apprehensions would probably have been less painful, had she recognised the person of the Colonel; but in the alarm of the moment, she saw only the dress of an American officer; was conscious only that he gazed at her with surprise; and overpowered by terror for her father's safety, she sunk senseless on the ground. Grahame, no longer doubting, what at first he could not prevail on himself to believe, that he beheld the daughter of the unfortunate Stapley, leaped from his horse; and raising her in his arms, gazed for a short space, in silent compassion, upon her inanimate features. But there was no time for delay, and he looked anxiously around to determine whither he should hasten with his lifeless charge. He had nearly resolved to fol-

low the windings of the narrow path in which he found her, conceiving it would lead him to some habitation, when his uncertainty was terminated by the appearance of a boy, who was in fact the son of Marion's kind hostess, and who readily consented to conduct the Colonel to his mother's house. Directing the boy to lead his horse, Grahame raised Marion in his arms, and carried her for near a mile, till they arrived at the obscure-farm house, where she and her father had fixed their present abode.

When Mr. Spencer's escape was first discovered, Colonel Grahame, convinced by all he had seen and heard respecting him, of his entire innocence, felt glad that he had eluded the cruel sentence of military justice, which would doubtless have been pronounced against him. He hoped and believed that the vigilant search, which was making to discover the fugitive would prove fruitless; and he was happy to find that it was given over, after an excitement of several weeks; when even the name of the suspected traitor ceased to be mentioned, except by a few individuals, who occasionally discussed the probability of his innocence or guilt. A report, which was put in circulation among the soldiers by the contrivance of Dory and her cousin, that Mr. Stanley had escaped from the country, finally silenced all inquiry; and at the period when Grahame to his unspeakable astonishment encountered Marion, her father's name was nearly forgotten in the army.

He sincerely regretted that the unhappy man was thrown by accident beneath his notice, as it seemed to impose upon him a kind of obligation to make the discovery known. As yet, however, he had not seen Mr. Stanley; he knew not that he was with his daughter; Marion too, though she had fainted at his appearance, might not have recognised him; and Grahame, resolving not to betray them, determined as soon as he had found a shelter for Marion, to quit her without inquiry, and without even waiting for her recovery. But he had scarcely crossed the threshold of the farm-house, when Marion revived; she saw and recognised her father's

friend ; and sliding from his arms to his feet, she bathed them with her tears, and besought him not to betray her father to his enemies. Touched by her distress he raised her with words of kindness, and a promise to preserve inviolate the secret of their abode.

The landlady, surprised and alarmed by the scene, hastened to inform Mr. Spencer, that his daughter had returned from her walk with an American officer, who though he seemed to be all kindness, and had promised not to betray them, might intend far differently. She therefore entreated him as soon as the officer should depart, to prepare for his removal to the cottage, which during his illness had been put in such a state of readiness as was practicable, for his reception. But Mr. Spencer, wholly incapacitated for exertion refused to consult his safety by a change of residence, and desired that the officer might be conducted to his room. He would throw himself upon his mercy, he said, and if he was inhumane enough to betray a dying man to his enemies, and render miserable the remainder of his poor girl's life, he would not deprive him of the cruel gratification ; but suffer him to enjoy it now, and reap the bitter fruits of it hereafter.

There was an air of authority in Mr. Spencer's manner, which the woman dared not resist ; and Colonel Grahame was accordingly conducted into the presence of the unhappy man.

A gleam of pleasure lighted up his haggard features, and softened the stern expression which he had summoned to confront a deadly foe, when raising his eyes, they encountered those of Colonel Grahame fixed, full of benignity and compassion, upon him. Marion darted to her father's arms and exclaimed, with tears of joy, "Dear father ! we are safe !"

Mr. Spencer pressed her to his heart, as he replied, "Yes, my dear girl, I read an assurance of it in that noble countenance, which never yet deceived the unfortunate."

Colonel Grahame was inexpressibly affected. The tenderness and deep affliction of the lovely Marion, and

the wasted form of her father, who in this wretched apartment, had been so long excluded from the light and air of heaven, awakened all his sympathy and compassion. Fervently grasping the feeble hand of the invalid, he said with emotion,

"Mr. Stanley, you have, indeed, nothing to fear from me; I believe you innocent; and were it otherwise, I could not forget that divine precept, which enjoins mercy before sacrifice. For my right hand, I would not betray you to danger, and deepen the affliction, which has already stolen its wonted bloom from the cheek of this innocent girl."

A touching scene ensued; but when the first emotions of sensibility had subsided, Mr. Spencer related to Grahame the manner of his escape, and the incidents which had occurred to detain him at the farm-house. The Colonel represented their present residence as wholly unsafe, and urged Mr. Spencer without delay to repair to the cottage which their hostess had named to them.

Colonel Grahame's visit infused hope and comfort into Mr. Spencer's heart; and Marion, convinced from his representations, that they would be wrong to remain any longer at the farm-house, prevailed on her father to remove to the cottage. In the course of a few days they were comfortably settled in their new retreat; where they intended to reside, till circumstances rendered an escape to some more remote spot practicable. Colonel Grahame visited them as often as he could without exciting suspicion; he furnished them with a thousand little comforts, and cheered their solitude with his society, till at last he became almost indispensable to them, and the ingenuous Marion, grateful for his kindness, expressed for him so much esteem, and anticipated his visits with so much impatience, that her father flattered himself her affections had found a new object, on which to repose themselves. The gentleness of Grahame's manner also, and the assiduity with which he seemed to study her happiness, persuaded Mr. Spencer, that the attachment was reciprocal; and pleas-



ed with the prospects, which such a connexion opened to his daughter, he suffered himself to look forward with hope to the period of its accomplishment. His fatal disorder continued to make slow but certain inroads upon his constitution ; and to deepen by its depressing influence, the disgust which he felt towards mankind ; with whom, he often declared, he never again wished to hold communion. He grew in love with his solitude ; and every day increased the aversion with which he thought of quitting it ; till at last convinced, that health would never more be his, he secretly resolved to waste away the remnant of life in this seclusion, satisfied that, when he should be no more, the affection of Grahame would provide for Marion a home and a protector.

Things remained in this state, till Colonel Grahame was ordered to join General Gates in the North ; and he went to take a melancholy farewell of his secluded friends, whom his absence left desolate and sad. By his care, Marion was provided with a flageolet, with books, implements of drawing, and such other sources of amusement as might serve to beguile the gloom of her retirement. These proofs of Grahame's kindness deepened the grateful esteem, with which she regarded him ; but did not, as her father fondly imagined, inspire her with any more tender emotions. On the contrary, while she beguiled her solitude with such accomplishments as she possessed, she recalled with fond regret, those happy days when she had practised them for the pleasure of O'Carroll, and been rewarded with those smiles and praises which he was wont to bestow upon her efforts.

The monotony of their lives was at length interrupted by the arrival of Obmeina, who, soon after he became attached to the person of Colonel Grahame, was sent by him to learn their situation and supply their wants. The precarious state of Mr. Spencer's health filled the Colonel with apprehension, lest he should suddenly expire, and leave his helpless daughter friendless and unprotected. Finding that the Indian was familiar with

that part of the country, Grahame despatched him without delay to execute his errand, and directed him to the farm-house, from whence he easily found his way to the abode of Mr. Spencer.

The solicitude with which Marion inquired after the Colonel, infused into the penetrating Ohmeina the belief that this fair creature, whom from her extreme delicacy he named the lily, loved and was beloved by his white brother; and his reports and observations first awakened in the Colonel's breast a fear, lest his attentions to this forlorn girl might have won for him a heart, which, even in thought, he had never aspired to possess. This suspicion, though for a time it occasioned him uneasiness, was entirely dispelled by a more intimate acquaintance with Marion; and he felt happy in the assurance that she regarded him only with the affection of a sister.

The accounts which Ohmeina brought of Mr. Spencer's declining health, caused Grahame, in the course of the summer again to send the Indian, who made nothing of the journey, to learn if any change had taken place. It was at this time, that Ohmeina became acquainted with the design of Richard Hope, to send secret despatches to the enemy; and zealous for the success of the cause which his benefactor had espoused, the faithful Indian considered it his duty to return with tidings of the discovery he had made. The information was important, and Grahame commissioned his emissary to return and watch the proceedings of the Quaker, and if possible to obtain the papers from him. These circumstances delayed Ohmeina's journey for that time; and when he afterwards commenced it, he was as our readers are already informed entrapped by the treachery of his savage brethren; so that he did not again visit the abode of Mr. Spencer, till a few days previous to the Colonel's arrival at Valley Forge.

When Mr. Forrester or Dalkeith, found himself stripped of the papers which he had prepared for the enemy, dreading the vengeance of the Indian, and the discovery of his person by some one who knew him,

should he be seized, he fled from Albany, and repaired by stolen routes to Philadelphia; where, taking obscure lodgings and again changing his name, he fixed his residence. Here he lived securely for several months; when one day, as he was standing at a shop door, a woman passed by, whose person he thought he recognised. He followed her, and obtaining a nearer view, recollected, during his former residence in the city, to have seen Mr. Spencer speaking to her in the street. His suspicions were aroused; he thought she might be attached to the service of Marion, and he resolved to follow her.

It was indeed Dory, who had come on some errand to her cousin's shop; and was now returning home. He followed her at a cautious distance, quite to the cottage. It was dark when he reached it; and as soon as Dory entered, he approached the window, and felt a savage joy when he ascertained, by a single glance, that his conjecture had proved true. He did not attempt to enter, because he had plans to mature before he discovered himself. At first he thought of revealing the place of Mr. Spencer's retreat, and delivering him up to justice; but then he feared he might lose Marion; besides, it was possible he might be taken cognizance of, himself, and he dared not incur the danger of a close investigation. Nor was this all; with the malice of a fiend, he resolved to render as bitter as possible the cup which he was preparing for his wretched victim; and he knew the last drop of misery would be added when the arts of the libertine should have wrenched from his arms the child of his affection.

On the next evening, Dalkeith returned to the forest, and a shower of rain beginning to fall, he was looking round for shelter, when he espied a boy, of whom he inquired if there was any dwelling near in which he could find shelter. The lad conducted him to the habitation of his grand-parents; and pleased with the stupidity of the old man, and the simplicity of his spouse, Dalkeith resolved to remain there, if they would permit him; considering it a convenient distance from the cottage, and a safe shelter from observation.

His request was granted ; and from that time he haunted the forest, and watched for an opportunity to fulfil his purpose. But he was prevented by fear of the Indian, whom he encountered on the night succeeding his arrival ; and after intoxicating, treated with abuse, because, inebriated as he was, he refused to answer his inquiries. Ohmeina, however, did not endure his insults passively ; he aroused himself to return the blows that were inflicted on him ; and he would doubtless have left Dalkeith senseless on the ground had not the coward fled precipitately away. After this, Dalkeith feared to encounter the Indian, nor did he dare to enter the cottage, lest he should be surprised by him while there.

He had now more than one object of hatred and revenge ; since Grahame and the Indian had both injured him, and both, he resolved, should feel his wrath. It was soon his fate to meet yet another, scarcely less abhorrent to him, when, in the course of a moonlight ramble, he one evening observed Captain O'Carroll walking arm in arm with Major Courtland. He followed cautiously, and listened to their conversation ; and at this and other times, when he saw O'Carroll walking with a friend, he gathered in the same way that information at which the Captain was afterwards so much surprised. Finding he could not venture near Marion while so many real and imaginary obstacles opposed him, Dalkeith resolved to make O'Carroll an instrument of his designs ; and for this purpose he affected great mystery, and so successfully wrought upon the Captain's irritable mind, as, at length, to obtain the wished-for object, and induce him to challenge Grahame. Dalkeith now thought himself sure of success. He had already prepared his hostess to expect Marion as his wife ; and the hour when the combatants would be engaged at a distance from the cottage, he designed for the execution of his project. To effect it without himself incurring danger, he bribed the lad, under an injunction of the strictest secrecy, to go with a message to Marion ; and this message, to ensure success, was to be sent in Colonel Grahame's name,

entreating her to repair to a particular spot, where he, having been wounded in a duel, was waiting to speak with her. Here Dalkeith was to meet and force her away with him ; and in the general confusion, occasioned by the duel, in which he hoped both parties would be wounded or killed, he should have time to escape with his prize ; since, even if she was missed directly, no one could tell with whom, or whither she was gone. In order to inform himself of the time and place appointed for the meeting, that he might regulate his plan accordingly, he had required from O'Carroll a promise to deposite a note containing this intelligence, in the hollow trunk of a particular tree ; and after this note he was searching at the moment when he was first observed by Miss Courtland on the morning of the expected meeting.

The lad, according to Dalkeith's directions, went cautiously towards the cottage, charged with the important message. But, as he approached it, he observed three gentlemen in earnest conversation ; and though he waited till two of them had gone, his design was still defeated by seeing the third enter and close the door behind him. The boy waited till he was tired ; and then, fearing to enter while a stranger was within, he repaired to the appointed place to inform his employer of the obstacle which prevented the execution of his commands. The circumstances, however, with which our readers are already acquainted, put a final period to Dalkeith's projects ; and the boy, after waiting till long past the appointed time, returned home, and was expecting Dalkeith's appearance, when Colonel Grahame descended the hill, and accosted him. The lad had suspected something wrong at first ; and the inquiry of Grahame, with the sight of the litter, convinced him that his suspicions were not unfounded. Fearing he had involved himself in difficulty, he obeyed the first impulse of alarm, and retreated with precipitation ; though he shortly returned, and confessed what part he had taken in the affair.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"A contract and eternal bond of love,  
 Confirmed by mutual joinder of your hands,  
 Attested by the holy close of lips,  
 Strengthened by interchangement of your rings;  
 Sealed in my function by my testimony."

*Shakspeare.*

THE situation in which Colonel Grahame found himself placed, with regard to Mr. Spencer and his daughter, seemed to throw them under his immediate protection, and to claim from him as large a portion of his time and attention as he could possibly bestow. After his return from Saratoga, he felt the claim doubly strong, in consequence of the rapidly declining health of Mr. Spencer, and the extreme affliction of Marion; and solicitous to alleviate their griefs, he spent much of that time which he would gladly have devoted to the society of Catherine Courtland, in the secluded dwelling of the melancholy fugitives.

Mr. Spencer, sensible that his present misfortunes had arisen from his own injustice and imprudence, felt an unconquerable reluctance to speak of the occurrences of his past life; and even permitted the generous Grahame to remain ignorant of his real name, and of every incident of his private history, except such as had fallen under the Colonel's immediate knowledge. He seldom, indeed, spoke of any thing which had passed, or was now passing in the world, and showed so strong a disinclination to receive any intelligence of the kind, that Grahame at length ceased to mention even the public events of the day. He had once, however, alluded to Major Courtland's family, and expressed his opinion that Marion, without the slightest hazard, might be permitted to enjoy their society. But Mr. Spencer decidedly rejected the proposal, and entreated Grahame never

to mention it in the presence of Marion, as he could not consent to her forming any acquaintance in her present situation ; and the knowledge of an agreeable family in the neighbourhood, might render her more unhappy in her retirement ; he also begged that their names might never be repeated to any individual in existence.

Grahame, unreasonable as he thought these requisitions, at least the former, could not refuse to gratify an unfortunate man, who, to all human appearance, had but a short space to live ; and he not only gave his own promise, but also forbade the Indians, on pain of his displeasure, to repeat any thing which occurred ; or to speak of the persons with whom they lived ; or to let the place of their residence become known. These injunctions they promised to obey, though Minoya came near forgetting them, when, delighted with Miss Courtland's flageolet, she played part of a tune which Marion had taught her, and spoke of "the lily," to the extreme chagrin of Grahame. Painful as he felt it to become an object of suspicion and distrust to those whom he regarded with friendship and esteem, yet with strict fidelity he preserved inviolate the secrecy which Mr. Spencer had enjoined upon him.

Circumstances were daily occurring to awaken doubt and conjecture ;—the accident of meeting O'Carroll, when one night, in returning from the cottage, he stopped to give Ohmeina some instructions ; the abruptness with which he was once called away in consequence of the sudden and extreme illness of Mr. Spencer ; the discovery of the chain which Minoya had twined around the dog's neck, together with a thousand other incidents which were perpetually occurring, to deepen an appearance of mystery, not to be explained without betraying the retreat and history of the unfortunate man, whose life and safety were in his keeping. Grahame saw with inexpressible pleasure, that the noble-minded Catherine refused to participate in the suspicions which had banished him from the confidence of others. The admiration with which, on his first acquaintance, he had regarded her, soon deepened into a fervent and lasting

affection, which he would long since have avowed, but for the cruel circumstances which subjected him to suspicion; and drew upon him the cold and altered regards of her father. Grahame felt that he would rather renounce her love than seek it in such a situation; and though he did not give utterance to his sentiments, it was impossible to control the expression of a countenance whose silent eloquence could not be misunderstood.

The conference which took place at the cottage between Marion and Captain O'Carroll, we have already repeated. It was scarcely terminated when Mr. Spencer awoke, and inquired for his daughter. Marion, dreading the effect which her lover's unexpected appearance might produce upon her father's mind, besought him to depart; and though desirous of an interview, he could refuse her nothing; and receiving a promise that he should be summoned when she had prepared her father to see him, he took a tender and reluctant leave; and with visions of love and happiness dancing before his eyes, pursued his way home.

It was past the hour of noon when he reached it; and he found Talbot and Amelia alone in the parlor; from the former of whom he learned with surprise the singular and tragical events of the morning. The possibility of its being the infamous Dalkeith, who had so relentlessly haunted and tormented him, had never once intruded itself into his mind; but the resentment, which under other circumstances he would have felt against him, was changed, by the knowledge of his miserable fate, into compassion. O'Carroll wished to set out instantly for the farm-house, to which Talbot, who had inquired the way of William, directed him; but he learned that Grahame was expected every moment at Major Courtland's; and he waited till he could no longer restrain his impatience, when, as the Colonel did not come, O'Carroll set out for the farm-house, which he entered a few minutes before Colonel Grahame's arrival at it.



The scene which passed there has been related. When Grahame and O'Carroll quitted the house, the confessions of Dalkeith and other incidents of the day, yielded them abundant topics of discourse ; and after an hour passed in explanations, apologies, and concessions, they parted mutually satisfied with each other, and happy in their respective prospects.

According to an agreement of the preceding evening, Grahame and O'Carroll met early at the farm-house ; but finding the unhappy man no more, they repaired together to the cottage of Mr. Spencer. When they entered, Minoya was sitting alone in the outer apartment, plaiting willow baskets, and singing in a low and, as usual, monotonous tone. In answer to Grahame's inquiries respecting Mr. Spencer, she said with a sorrowful look that he was very bad, and Marion had watched with him all night. O'Carroll was agitated by the thought of his Marion's toil and affliction, and Grahame begging him to compose himself and remain for a short time with Minoya, left him and entered the sick man's apartment.

He found him much changed since the preceding day ; but his countenance, though deathly, was placid and serene ; and as he extended his hand towards Grahame, he said with a smile,

" You find me changed my kind friend, but not sadly so. The spirit I think will soon leave her prison-house, and I have been seeking to reconcile my Marion to its departure. Should she not rejoice that my weary pilgrimage is almost ended ; and that through the mediation of the Redeemer, to the foot of whose cross you have led me, I have hope of soon entering a region of unclouded joy ?"

" Marion rejoices as we all do," said Grahame, affectionately taking the hand of the weeping girl, " in the brightness of that faith and hope, which shed the peace and serenity of heaven over the sadness of this trying hour. But religion, though she soothes our sorrows, does not forbid their indulgence, and the best disciplined heart must bleed with anguish, when about to

be severed from the dear and cherished objects of its love."

"Severed for a short time only," said Mr. Spencer, "to be re-united in that world where the heart shall no more be pained with the agony of separation. So weep not immoderately, my child; a short time only and we shall again meet where tears and farewells are unknown."

Marion was so much affected that Grahame feared she would faint; and obeying a signal from her father, he led her gently from the room and consigned her to the care of O'Carroll, who seemed transported with happiness when he beheld her. But she was so overwhelmed with the thought of her father's approaching dissolution that she had no room for joy in her heart; and though she strove to smile upon her impassioned lover it was through tears, and with a sadness which told how much the effort cost her.

When Grahame returned to Mr. Spencer, he found him somewhat disturbed, though he became composed when the Colonel informed him she was better, and would soon return to him. After a pause of some minutes during which, Mr. Spencer seemed striving to collect himself, he said with effort,

"Colonel Grahame I have still somewhat to say, which from a reluctance to forfeit any portion of that esteem with which you have honored me, I have delayed to communicate till now. But Heaven, I trust, has pardoned the errors of parental affection, and you are too just, and too generous not to forgive them also."

"Do not pain yourself by an exertion to which your strength is inadequate," said Grahame; "nor recall the images of the past to disturb the tranquillity of the present moment, I am already informed of every thing, Marion tells me that you know of her interview with Captain O'Carroll; and the accident which occasioned their re-union led to other occurrences, which have developed not only your history but also the intrigues of that infamous man, who has been the cause of all your misfortunes."

Mr. Spencer, in an agitated voice, entreated Grahame to explain himself, which he did, but briefly, upon every point connected with the incidents of the preceding days. Mr. Spencer heard the narration with far more composure than the Colonel had anticipated; though he was greatly affected by the account of Dalkeith's tragical end, and said, when Grahame finished, that he could feel no enmity against a man whom the wrath of heaven had so dreadfully punished; and that for himself he had now nothing to do in the world but to obtain O'Carroll's forgiveness, and bestow on him the object of his love. Grahame fearing he would exhaust himself before O'Carroll's entrance, hastened to inform him that the Captain was there in the next apartment with his daughter, and entreated that he might be allowed to conduct the lovers to his bedside. Mr. Spencer assented, and Grahame left the room to communicate his wishes.

In a few moments they all re-entered the sick man's apartment, who, as soon as he saw O'Carroll, stretched forth his hand, exclaiming with emotion,

"My son! that smile of peace assures me all is forgiven."

"Forgiven, and forgotten," returned O'Carroll, as he pressed the hand of Mr. Spencer fervently between his own."

"I thank you, O'Carroll, and may heaven reward you as you merit," said Mr. Spencer, with a grateful smile. Then calling Marion, who hung weeping on the arm of Grahame, towards him, he added,

"I had much to say to you, Captain O'Carroll; but my strength is well nigh exhausted, and I can only ask you to receive this orphan girl as the pledge of a father's grateful affection. I know you will cherish her tenderly and make her happier, far happier, than I have done. Take her as my last and choicest gift; she is all that I have to bestow."

"And had you worlds to give they would be valueless compared to her!" exclaimed O'Carroll; while instinctively his arm encircled her, and he ventured to

press her with passionate tenderness to his heart. They sunk upon their knees beside the dying man, who laying his hand upon his daughter's head regarded them for a few moments in silence, while a secret wish seemed struggling in his breast for utterance. At length, however, he said with calmness,

"My children, the wish strongly possesses me to see you united in indissoluble bonds, before I am called to leave you. The chamber of death is gloomy for a bridal; but I know it will afford my Marion purer pleasure to gratify a father's last request, than she could derive from all the gaiety and festive mirth that ever graced a nuptial feast."

Marion dropped her head upon her father's hand, and said in a low and trembling voice,

"Father! dear father, at *such* an hour!"

"Yes, my love, even at such an hour as this," returned Mr. Spencer. "My eyes will soon be closed in darkness; but I would first give my child to him, who will henceforth be to her a father, friend, and husband."

"Consent, dearest Marion," whispered O'Carroll; it is your father's wish, the last perhaps, which you can gratify; and from his hand I would receive a gift so precious."

Tears gushed from Marion's eyes, as she pressed her glowing lips to the deathlike cheek of her father, and whispered in an accent scarcely audible,

"Dearest father, I have no will but yours."

Mr. Spencer threw his arm around her and held her in silence to his heart. After a few moments' mutual indulgence of their feelings, Mr. Spencer expressed a wish to have the ceremony performed immediately; and while O'Carroll strove to sooth and comfort the desponding Marion, Grahame went out to prepare Dory and the Indian for the unexpected event; and send to request the attendance of a clergyman, whose visits at the Colonel's request, Mr. Spencer had within the last few weeks consented to receive.

As he resided at the distance of some miles from the

cottage, an hour or more elapsed before his arrival. During that interval Marion had acquired a tolerable degree of composure ; but it fled the moment the clergyman entered the room, and it was not till she saw how much her father was agitated by her emotion, that she could command herself sufficiently to subdue it. O'Carroll was a Catholic ; but Marion had been educated in the principles of the established church, and the clergyman who officiated at her melancholy bridal, was fortunately of the same persuasion.

During the solemn ceremony Marion seemed almost unconscious of what was passing. O'Carroll even found it necessary to support her, lest she should sink upon the floor. Her responses were scarcely audible, and it was not till the bridegroom placed upon her finger the symbol of their union, that she appeared to awaken from the lethargy that oppressed her. A flood of tears then gushed from her eyes, and during the remainder of the service they continued to flow without intermission. When it was ended, Grahame fervently pressed O'Carroll's hand as a mute expression of his good wishes, and kissed Marion's tearful cheek in silence ; delicately forbearing to offer his congratulations at a moment, when he was aware that her heart was full of sorrow.

O'Carroll, happy in despite of the melancholy circumstances attending his nuptials, led his weeping bride to her father, who regarded them both with a smile of complacency, embraced and blessed them, declaring that his last wish was now accomplished, and he should descend to the grave in peace.

And it seemed, indeed, as if he had only waited for this event ; for soon after it was passed he fell into a lethargic slumber, which continued till evening ; he then appeared to revive a little, though he spoke no more ; but remained till morning with his eyes fixed fondly upon Marion's face, and her hand clasped to his heart, when his struggling spirit was released from its fleshly bondage, and returned again to him from whom it was received.

Marion endured the final shock with greater firmness than could have been expected, considering the deep affection which she had cherished for her father, and the agony with which she had anticipated a final separation. She loved to think upon the peace of his last hours; and this recollection together with the soothing of love, and the consolations of that religion which had sustained her through so many scenes of suffering, enabled her still to bear up with a good degree of fortitude under this bereavement.

Major Courtland gave orders to have the remains of Mr. Spencer deposited in his own family vault; and after the affecting ceremony of interment was over, O'Carroll and his bride quitted the cottage, and took up their residence at the house of Major Courtland, till an opportunity should offer for their return to Ireland. Dory, also, and the Indians followed; and though O'Carroll proposed to have them married, and to give them the sole occupancy of the cottage for life, neither of them evinced the least inclination for this romantic plan. Ohmeina fond of a wandering life, chose rather to follow the fortunes of his master, and Minoya had imbibed so strong an attachment to the gentle Marion, that she resolutely declared it her design, "to go with the fair lily across the big waters." Marion grateful for her affection, and for the services which the poor Indian had rendered her in misfortune, cheerfully encouraged this determination, particularly as it was agreeable to O'Carroll, who enjoyed the idea of Minoya's astonishment at the wonders she would see, and anticipated the surprise which would be manifested by the inhabitants of the old world, when they saw upon their shores a tawny native of the American forests.

The enjoyment of cheerful and polished society, the soothing of affection, and the endeavours of all around her to alleviate her sorrow, produced their desired effect upon Marion's health and spirits. Though the past had been to her a scene of suffering, she was happy in the consciousness of having performed her duty, and the recollection of those hours when she had contributed to

her father's comfort, beguiled him into cheerfulness; and by her artless endeavours caused him for a while to forget his misfortunes, brought with it a sweet and calm serenity, which diffused the balm of peace into her wounded heart. The roses of returning health blushed faintly on her cheek; and O'Carroll saw with rapture, smiles of happiness once more wreathing the lips, and dancing in the soft blue eyes, where sorrow had so long exerted her blighting influence.

He was the happiest and the tenderest of husbands; and his character, as Talbot remarked, seemed wholly changed after the period of his marriage. The melancholy circumstances attending it had perhaps contributed to chasten the exuberance of his natural gaiety; and his irascible temper seemed to have caught some portion of the gentleness, meekness, and forbearance which characterised the lovely woman, to whom he had united himself. But amid the enjoyments of happy love, O'Carroll did not forget the claims and obligations of friendship; he remembered with grateful emotion, the noble forbearance which Colonel Grahame had exercised towards him; the generosity with which he had pardoned his injustice; and the solicitude which he had expressed for his happiness; above all, he thought with unutterable gratitude of the care, the protection, the unceasing kindness which he had bestowed upon his Marion, during months of the most trying adversity; he could not feel his own happiness complete, till he saw that of a friend so noble, and so deservedly dear, placed upon a basis as permanent and secure as his own.

Marion loved Grahame as tenderly as if he had been her own brother; and anxious for his happiness, and aware of his attachment to Miss Courtland, she earnestly wished that before she quitted the country, she might see him united to a woman so worthy the affection of his pure and upright heart. It was often a theme of discourse between her and her husband; but though the Colonel was a daily visitor, the affair seemed to approach no nearer to a crisis, and O'Carroll began to fear

that some secret obstacle still hindered the avowal of his wishes.

Major Courtland was yet confined by a slow nervous fever to his apartment; and he saw scarcely any one except his daughter, whose constant attentions seemed indispensable to his happiness, and whose presence he constantly required, excepting when, as mistress of the mansion, it was necessary for her to be with her guests. The Major still declared his design of returning to England as soon as his health should be sufficiently established; and Catherine, aware that his illness was principally occasioned by disappointment and vexation, arising from her rejection of Talbot, felt it an incumbent duty to make no opposition to his wishes.

She could think with calmness of quitting America, and parting forever from Grahame, while she believed that an insuperable obstacle divided them, and that duty as well as delicacy required her to subdue an unfortunate attachment. But when every shade which had gathered around him was dispelled, and his character burst forth still fairer and brighter than before; when she saw him so happy in his honorable acquittal, and met his eye beaming with the most unequivocal affection, and heard his voice soften into tenderness, as he addressed her, she thought with increased reluctance of her departure, and sighed in secret over the disappointment of her cherished hopes.

She was aware that Colonel Grahame sought a private interview with her; but she avoided it, conscious, that, should an avowal be made, her father in his present irritable state of mind and body, would be made more ill by proposals so averse to his wishes, and would probably give them an unhesitating and decided rejection. He seldom spoke of Colonel Grahame; though when his conduct relative to Mr. Spencer and O'Carroll was related to him, he had been affected even to tears, and expressed himself warmly in praise of a character so noble. But he shortly relapsed into silence; and though on the following day he admitted the Colonel to his apartment, and received him with wonted kind-



ness and cordiality, he did not afterwards revert to the subject; and by some qualifying observations, endeavoured to apologize for his display of feeling.

Catherine was sometimes tempted to think her father harsh, and wanting in the affection which he had expressed for her; but she ever checked such feelings, persuaded that he sought her happiness; and opposed her wishes only because he thought his own plans best calculated to promote it. She knew that the prejudices of birth had been strengthened by education, and that his pride could not endure the thought of giving his only child to a citizen of that country which had risen in arms against the lawful authority of his king. But as long as such continued to be his feelings and prejudices, she felt that there was little hope of his acceding to the wishes of Grahame.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Fair Katharine, and most fair!  
Will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms,  
Such as will enter at a lady's ear,  
And plead his love-suit to her gentle heart?  
*Shakspeare.*

COLONEL GRAHAME had early penetrated the sentiments of Major Courtland; and apprehensive of the influence which they might have upon the pure and candid mind of Catherine, he sought the earliest opportunity after the denouement of Mr. Spencer's history, to speak with her upon the subject of his hopes. But she was so constantly engaged either with her father or her guests, that he could never obtain a moment's uninterrupted conversation with her. Wearied at last with doubt and uncertainty, he one evening rode towards

Major Courtland's, resolving, if again disappointed, to request of Catherine the favor of a private interview.

As he approached the house, he discerned some one walking alone on the piazza, and the keen eye of the lover was not slow in recognizing, even in the uncertainty of moonlight, the graceful figure of her whom he most loved. Hastily dismounting, he threw the bridle to his servant, and springing up the steps, stood by Catherine's side before she had been able to identify the person of the horseman. Grahame felt that the opportunity was a golden one, and not to be lost; and when she motioned to enter the house, he drew her hand gently through his arm, and said, as he turned from the door,

"Pardon me, Miss Courtland; the evening is fine, and if you do not feel the air too cool, I will beg you to oblige me by remaining here a few moments longer. I am fortunate to find you alone. There are so many claims upon you of late that I sometimes fear those hours of delightful intercourse which I once enjoyed in your society are never more to return; and I recall them with such sensations, as the weary traveller feels, when in a burning desert, he looks back to the green and sunny fields of his native land, and sighs to think that he shall never see them more."

"I hope soon to be released from some of the claims which consume, though not unpleasantly, so large a portion of my time," returned Catherine, with a composure which she was far from feeling. "My father," she added, "is so much better to-day, that I trust his entire recovery will soon permit me to bestow that undivided attention upon my friends which has been necessarily engrossed by him."

"But then I shall not be here to share it," said Grahame. "Already the note of preparation is sounding in our camp, and soon we shall go forth to die or conquer. If victory crowns our arms, I shall rejoice as the citizen of a country which has nobly contended for her rights, and won them through toil, and suffering, and self denial, such as men battling for an unrighteous cause could

never have sustained. But, as a lonely, unconnected, solitary individual, I shall have no cause for joy. There is no eye to watch for my return, no arms that will extend to welcome me; and should I survive, the widows and the mothers who weep for the objects of their love, will reproach Heaven, in the anguish of their hearts, for having destroyed the lives which were dearest to them, and preserved that which is neither useful nor precious to any."

"Why do you speak to me thus?" exclaimed Catherine, in a trembling voice; "you, from whom I never before heard the language of dejection or complaint? why is it that you pain me with this melancholy picture?"

"I would tell you what is now my situation and my feelings," said Grahame; "and I would plead with you, dearest Catherine, that I may no longer remain this solitary, isolated being. There is a voice, whose faintest tone is dearer to me than the murmurs of applauding multitudes; and a heart for which I would barter the fairest wreath that ever graced the brow of a conqueror. Let, then, that voice tell me my hopes are not presumptuous; and that the heart to which I aspire does not refuse the request which is prompted by the purest and the most devoted affection, and it will nerve the soldier's arm with new valor, and invest futurity with a charm which nothing but the happiness of a virtuous attachment can bestow."

"It cannot be!" exclaimed Catherine in a low and tremulous voice. "Why have you made this unfortunate avowal, which must involve us both in perplexity and regret?"

"Call it not an unfortunate avowal, dear Catherine," returned Grahame; "nor render it so by resolving to reject it. If I am not an object of indifference to you, what obstacle prevents our union, or forbids the indulgence of that affection which we may cherish for each other?"

"Alas! you know not my father," said Catherine; "you know nothing of the strength of his prejudices, and are not aware how violently he would oppose my

union with one who has raised his weapon against the laws and the sovereign of England."

"I well know these *were* your father's prejudices," said Grahame; "but I hoped that observation and experience had before this banished them from a mind so candid and enlightened. Yet though he still cherish them, he will not let them interfere with your happiness; and when, with the eloquence which love shall teach me, I entreat him to intrust it to my keeping, a father's heart will not resist the prayer. Say, dearest Catherine, that you permit me, and I will haste to him this moment."

"No, you must not go to him," said Catherine, earnestly; "he is ill, and I dare not suffer you to mention a subject which I know will agitate him."

"I will assuredly obey you," he said. "But I have endured suspense till it has become intolerable; and I would learn from you, dear Catherine, if this prohibition is designed to shut me from the hope which I have so long cherished, of being at last admitted to a place in the affections of the only woman whom I have ever loved, and for whom alone I wish to live."

Catherine raised her bashful eyes for a moment to his face, when they sunk beneath the gaze of eager and passionate expectation with which his were bent upon her; but superior to all that ungenerous coquetry which the female heart is fond of exercising in its moments of power, she replied with that noble and ingenuous candor which always distinguished her,

"Colonel Grahame, I cannot, nor ought I to conceal from you my sentiments; they are all in your favor; and I am not ashamed to acknowledge that I have been won by the virtues of a mind to whose keeping I am willing to intrust my future happiness, and where I confidently repose my affections and my hopes."

"Heaven bless you for that kind assent, my sweetest Catherine!" exclaimed Grahame; "and the heart which you have honored by your preference, shall study only to reward and merit the affection which it values more than life."

He bent towards her, as he spoke, and Catherine felt herself pressed with gentleness to his heart; that heart which she had made to throb with rapture, and for which her own was overflowing with the purest and the fondest tenderness. Footsteps were at this moment heard approaching, and the voice of O'Carroll, humming a gay air, interrupted the tete-a-tete of the lovers. Catherine, disengaging her arm from Grahame, glided past him, and entered the house, while the Colonel, vexed at this untimely interruption, turned coldly to receive the salutation of his friend.

"I fear I am an unwelcome intruder," said O'Carroll, as he gazed for a moment after the retreating form of Catherine, and then turned to read by the pale moonlight, the expression of Grahame's countenance.

"I am always candid with you, O'Carroll," said the Colonel; "and I tell you without reserve, that I would rather have seen you at any other time."

"And I was a fool to come out just at this unlucky moment," said O'Carroll; "though if Catherine had not fled so like a frightened deer, I should have retreated instantly. But I hope, Grahame, I have not been the unhappy cause of protracting that state of agonizing uncertainty, when the heart in trembling expectation awaits an answer to its fond petition?"

"I am happily liberated from that state which you describe with so much feeling," returned Grahame, with a smile; "and my heart has received the sweet assurance of my dear Catherine's affection. So distress yourself no more, O'Carroll; I forgive your ill-timed intrusion, and the length of my next interview shall atone for the briefness of this."

"Really then," said O'Carroll, "you have at last drawn aside the veil which has so long concealed your heart; and Catherine did not shrink from the display of all its hopes, nor even from the whispered secret of its love."

"She might have shrunk from the suddenness of its exposure," returned Grahame; "but she was too gentle to reprove it; and emboldened by her sweetness, I

urged my suit, and drew from her that dear avowal which has made me at once the happiest and most highly favored of men."

"Weddings multiply upon us apace," said O'Carroll. "Talbot has won the consent of his yielding fair one to become his for better and for worse, next Tuesday week; and if you will employ me to plead your cause, I will obtain Kate's promise to place herself under your jurisdiction at the same time. Major Courtland is getting well as fast as he can; so I think he will be able to dance with us on the happy occasion."

"I fear he will never be well enough to dance at my wedding," returned Grahame; "since his daughter, who must of course know his sentiments better than either of us, fears even to let me speak to him upon the subject, lest in his present debilitated state, it should occasion an unfavorable, if not a fatal excitement."

"What folly, what worse than folly!" exclaimed O'Carroll, with all his wonted impetuosity. "My Marion's story should warn ambitious fathers to beware how they trifle with the affections of their children; and with this example, and its melancholy consequences, yet fresh in his remembrance, can Major Courtland persist in thwarting the wishes of an only daughter; and vainly expect to recompense her for the sacrifice of her dearest hopes by a marriage of heartless splendor, contracted according to the cold and formal dictates of a selfish and worldly policy?"

"No, he will not do it," returned Grahame; "Catherine will consent to no such contract. She may resign me to gratify her father's wishes; but I am persuaded that even paternal authority will not induce her to marry one who does not possess her affection. But I love too fondly to despair; and I think Major Courtland too candid and conscientious a man to remain long under the influence of unjust prejudice, and too affectionate a father to persist in denying the wishes and disappointing the hopes of his daughter."

O'Carroll shook his head, with a doubtful air, as he replied.

"Major Courtland, with all his good qualities, and he has as many and more than most men, is as obstinate and headstrong as a mastiff; and withal as ambitious and aspiring as if he had always lived in the atmosphere of a court. He cannot forgive Catherine for despising Talbot's long rent rolls, and the tempting coronet which hangs in reversion over him; and he is resolved to take her, as soon as may be, to the other side of the Atlantic, where fortune and titles are less rare, and strengthen her claim to hereditary nobility by a marriage which shall at once cure her unnatural *penchant* for the simplicity of republican minds and republican manners."

"It is a *penchant*," said Grahame, rather haughtily, "which he will find it no easy task to eradicate from a pure and unsophisticated mind; and I honor Miss Courtland for having imbibed it in opposition to the corrupt precepts which would have taught her to prefer the artificial refinements and effeminate luxury of European manners."

"It is that pride of family which Englishmen prate so much about," said O'Carroll, "that renders Major Courtland anxious respecting the future alliance of his daughter. You must know he has had one Earl, two Baronets, two Bishops, a General, and I do not recollect what else, in his family; and he is desirous rather to see its original lustre restored than to have it quenched at once, and irretrievably, by the union of its last descendant with a plain Mr. or Captain, or even Colonel —; a peaceable citizen of the American Colonies, or States, as you have termed them in your rebellious Declaration of Independence; who leads a quiet and unostentatious life in some corner of the union; who seeks not to trace his descent farther back than two generations; and who looks forward to nothing higher for his son than a seat perhaps in Congress, where a star never glittered save through the window of the legislative hall, and a garter was never heard of, except round the lamb's-wool stocking of some Yankee member. And this for a descendant of the Courtlands,

and the Stanton's, and the Calthorpes, and the Lord knows who ! Forbid it pride, decency, family respect ! forbid it every thing that induces a man of birth to cross the affections of his children, and spoil their tempers for the sake of making them wretched, in what the world calls a splendid marriage !"

Grabame could not suppress a smile at the humor of his friend ; but he replied, with a serious air,

"I have no respect for family pride when carried to an extreme of such ridiculous weakness. But let Major Courtland and others despise us, if they will, for the Roman simplicity of our manners, for the stern and inflexible purity of our morals, and for the slight value which we set upon the incidental distinctions of rank, and the gorgeous trappings of inordinate wealth. It is our glory, that we are a free, a valiant, and a virtuous people,—and our pride, that we are descended from learned and honorable men, who, for 'conscience sake,' renounced the delights of polished life, to found in this western wilderness a mighty nation, where they established institutions, which, as a rich inheritance, they bequeathed to their children, who at the peril of life and property, will maintain and transmit them inviolate to their posterity."

"Grabame, I am more than half a patriot already," said O'Carroll, moved by the virtuous enthusiasm of his friend ; "so speak to me no more of your pure principles and your noble resolutions, if you would not have me branded with the name of traitor. I confess I have of late sometimes indulged a truant thought, that our gracious king would have done better quietly to relinquish his American possessions, than to send us here to burn and destroy them with fire and sword ; yet still I felt with many others, who doubted the absolute justice of the cause, that I carried his commission, and was sworn to loyalty and obedience ; so I hushed my conscience, and without seeking for farther knowledge, said with honest John Bates, 'We know enough, if we know we are the king's subjects ; if his cause be wrong,



our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us.’”

“And you recollect the answer,” returned Grahame; “‘If the cause be not good, the king himself hath a heavy reckoning to make.’”

“No, his turbulent ministers shall make it for him;” returned O’Carroll; “but let them settle their own affairs in their own way; we have strangely strayed from love to politics; and had I before doubted the fervor and sincerity of your patriotism, I could do it no longer, since, in the very moment of successful love, you neglect the charms of your mistress, to eulogize your country.”

“In eulogizing my country, I eulogize my mistress,” said Grahame; “for she has increased my ardor in its cause; and by her eloquence strengthened my conviction of its justice.”

“You will, I think, find in her a congenial spirit,” said O’Carroll; “and my tongue must have lost some of its persuasion with the Major if it cannot induce him to grant your wishes. Empower me to plead your cause, and I will beset him day and night till it is won.”

“No; I have intrusted you with my secret,” returned Grahame; “and you must promise me to preserve it inviolate. I thank you for your good wishes, and your proffered services, O’Carroll; but the moment Miss Courtland grants me permission, I intend to plead my own cause with her father; and I have so much confidence in the excellence of his heart, that I even expect to subdue the prejudices which oppose my hopes, and to enjoy with his approbation the happiness to which his lovely daughter permits me to aspire.”

“May you prove a successful suitor,” said O’Carroll; “but here comes my Marion to look after her truant;” he added, turning towards her as she came upon the piazza, accompanied by Talbot and Amelia. She approached her husband, and passing her hand through his arm, began playfully to reproach him for stealing from her; when, perceiving Grahame, she checked herself; and after saluting him with the frank affection of a sister, the conversation became general.

Grahame, however, remained but a few moments longer; and anxious to indulge in solitude, the delightful emotions of his heart, he bade the little group good evening, and departed without entering the house. Several days passed on, during which the Colonel's visits were frequent; but still Catherine, though she permitted him to speak to her upon the subject nearest his heart, continued averse to its being mentioned to her father. She knew how much it would disturb him; and as he was now convalescing, she dreaded any excitement which might occasion a relapse.

O'Carroll, in the mean time, could scarcely restrain himself from addressing the Major on the subject; only his promise to Grahame prevented; but though forbidden to speak openly, he resolved indirectly to aid his cause. For this purpose he often conversed with Major Courtland on the character and misfortunes of Mr. Spencer; censured the folly of his ambitious views; and lamented the misery of which they had been productive. At other times he praised the character and conduct of Grahame; his courage, his self-command, his freedom from all unmanly prejudice or degrading jealousy; and mentioned numerous instances of his excellence and virtue. Major Courtland was struck by O'Carroll's enthusiastic praises of his friend; and conscious that Grahame deserved them all, he felt a pang of self-reproach, when he recollected with what caprice he had treated this noble young man, with what harshness he had censured his daughter's affection for him, and how foolishly he had resolved to sacrifice her happiness to that vain ambition which had shortened the life of Mr. Spencer, and crushed the early hopes of Marion. As these thoughts agitated him, his former feelings revived for Grahame; and he half resolved, unasked to bestow on him his daughter. But still the cherished weakness which he had nurtured for years, clung to his heart; and he had not courage to renounce the glittering dream of wealth and honors, for the assurance of that permanent and rational happiness, which, as he well knew, was all that Catherine desired.

Full of these reflections, one fine evening, when he had so far recovered as to walk and ride without restraint, he bent his steps towards the garden, communing as he went with his heart, and demanding of it how he ought to act. As usual, when peculiarly occupied with thoughts of interest and importance, he turned from the gravel walks, to seek the spot dear to him, as the last resting-place of his still fondly remembered wife. The trees which shaded the marble obelisk, were bursting into leaf; and the borders of the little stream, that with low, sweet music glided gently past, were gay with the earliest blossoms of spring. As Major Courtland approached the rustic bench, beneath the shade of the drooping willows, where so many sad yet happy hours of his widowed life had passed, he observed Catherine sitting alone, and so wrapt in meditation, that she seemed unconscious of his approach. Her pensive attitude, and the soft melancholy which was diffused over her countenance, increased the striking resemblance which she bore to her mother; and Major Courtland, touched by the affecting remembrances thus awakened, stood for some moments silently gazing upon her, and almost persuaded that he saw before him the image of his beloved wife.

A deep sigh from her father, disturbed Catherine's reverie, and she arose in confusion; while a crimson blush suffused her features, which alone was sufficient to inform him what had been the nature of her meditations. He took her hand, and leading her gently back to the seat, placed himself beside her, and kissed her tenderly, as he said,

"You were not wont to fly from me, my love; but if I am an unwelcome intruder, I will leave you again to enjoy alone the silence of this sacred retreat."

"An intruder, dearest father!" she replied; "Oh you well know your presence is always welcome to me, and never more so than in this dear spot, the scene of our sweetest intercourse."

"It is long, my Catherine," said her father, "since that intimate communion which we once enjoyed, and which seemed to make us all in all to each other, has

ceased ; and I am sometimes so foolish as to fear, that since your attentions have been divided by the enlargement of our family circle, your affections, too, have been weakened and alienated from me, on whom you are no longer entirely dependent for society and enjoyment."

"And have I been so unhappy as to give you cause for this suspicion?" asked Catherine, in a tone of wounded feeling. "My love for you, dear father, can never be weakened ; it increases with every hour of my life ; and whatever claims may be made upon my heart, none can lessen the affection which binds me so closely to you, nor render me forgetful of the thousand sacrifices you have made for me, and the tender care with which you have cherished me from the hour of my birth till now."

"I know it, my dear Catherine," returned her father, tenderly embracing her ; "I know and feel it deeply ; and my affection shall not make me suspicious. I am proud of my child, and happy in her love ; it has been the balm and solace of my life ; and I wish only to repay her as she merits, for all the happiness which she has shed around my path."

"My dearest recompense is your affection, my beloved father," said Catherine ; "continue that to me, and I am happy."

"That will ever be yours," returned her father ; "but a father's love, dear as it may be, is insufficient to satisfy the youthful heart ; it seeks its happiness in those tender ties which nature prompts it to form, and which, selfish as my affection is, I would not wish you to reject. Yet, my dear girl, I fear lest the enthusiasm of a youthful mind may lead you into error, and induce you to yield without due consideration to the romantic tenderness of a first attachment, which perhaps a longer acquaintance or a more perfect knowledge of the world might convince you was insufficient to secure your happiness, and cause you to repent the rashness and precipitancy of a choice made in retirement, and under circumstances which rendered it hazardous and imprudent. Nay," he continued, as she attempted to inter-

rupt him, "suffer me to speak a moment longer. I do not say you *have* made this choice ; but I warn you against making it without deep and deliberate reflection. I tell you candidly, Catherine, it is not one which I can cordially sanction ; though if your happiness depends upon it, I shall not withhold my consent. If you are resolved, I cannot hope to tempt you by prospects of future grandeur, since you have already rejected an alliance which might have gratified the most aspiring mind ; but I will remind you, that there are those in your own country whom you may not think unworthy of your affection, and who would feel themselves honored by a union with the daughter of a house, which for centuries has furnished illustrious statesmen and brave soldiers to serve and defend its sovereign and its native land. And, thank God, neither a coward's shame, nor a traitor's infamy has ever been known to cast a blot upon the stainless honor of their escutcheon !"

"Father," said Catherine, "I am not insensible to the dignity of my descent ; and I will assuredly avoid an alliance which may reflect disgrace upon it. But, I trust, the proudest of my ancestors were superior to the mere distinctions of rank ; and you are sensible if they were not, of the insufficiency of wealth alone, to confer happiness. Why then should I, whom you have brought up in a land of simple habits, and suffered to adopt the sentiments and the manners of the people amongst whom I have been educated, affect to despise what I have learned to admire ; and forsake a country, where all my attachments have been formed, and where all my hopes of happiness are centered, to go among strangers ; and this for the sake only of that vain and illusive splendor which is valueless and unattractive to me ?"

"Catherine," said her father, gravely, "you can no longer hide from me the secret of your heart ; it is apparent in all you say ; and it unfolds to me the cause which has rendered futile all my projects, and disappointed the fondest expectations of my heart."

"Dearest father," exclaimed Catherine, "why should they be disappointed ? why, since you seek only my

happiness, should you regret that it cannot be promoted by the fulfilment of those ambitious schemes, which would plant my pillow with thorns, and strew my path with the cares and vexations that are ever attendant upon greatness?"

"And you do not deny your affection for Colonel Grahame!" said the Major, chagrined to find his last hope frustrated. "You no longer seek to conceal your love for a stranger and a rebel; and you expect me to sanction this unnatural passion, which alienates you from your kindred, and makes you hostile to your king and country."

"And if it does not alienate from me my father's heart, I shall have no cause for regret," said Catherine, as she threw herself into his arms and hid her blushing face in his bosom. "Father," she added, "you have probed the secret of my heart; a secret which has long trembled on my lips; but which I have feared to disturb you by revealing."

"I should have expected less reserve from my ingenuous Catherine," said her father, scarcely returning her caress; "and more manly frankness from Colonel Grahame, than thus secretly to win and enjoy the affections of my child, without even seeking the consent of her father."

"I only deserve your censure," said Catherine; "I dreaded to disturb you while you were ill; and it was not till to day that I gave him permission to address you on the subject. I do not seek to conceal from you, dear father, how deeply my happiness is involved in the success of his application. Yet, painful as the sacrifice may be, I will sooner resign my hopes, than see them fulfilled at the expense of your wishes and enjoyment. There is nothing that I can conscientiously perform, which I would not do, at the request of my dear father, whose whole life has been one continued act of kindness and indulgence, which it is impossible that I can ever repay."

Major Courtland was touched by her tenderness and filial piety; and he said with emotion, as he embraced her,

"My child, none ever deserved a father's love as you have done; and few have so richly repaid a father's anxious care. It is true, that I desire only your happiness; and if that is secured, why, indeed, should I regret the failure of my worldly dreams? That cold marble speaks to me impressively of their vanity; and at its foot, I have often resolved to be deluded by them no longer. Beneath it are buried all my youthful hopes, and none surely have had sadder conviction than myself, of the uncertainty and evanescence of all human expectations and possessions. Be happy, then, my Catherine, with the object of your choice; whom, throwing aside the unjust feelings which have so long perverted my judgment, I believe to possess every requisite, which can promote and ensure your felicity."

Catherine overwhelmed by this unexpected kindness, where she had dreaded only reproach and opposition, fell weeping on her father's neck. He pressed her tenderly to his heart; and never, perhaps, had either experienced happiness so exquisite, or felt so forcibly the strength of that affection which bound them to each other. Major Courtland was renouncing the cherished hopes of years, and yielding his consent to a union which he had long determined to oppose. Yet never, in the moment of his fondest triumph, had he felt his mind so tranquil and serene, or enjoyed so exquisitely that peace, which springs from conscious rectitude and purity of conduct.

Footsteps sounding near them disturbed the silence they were so highly enjoying; and Catherine started from her father's arms, and sought to avert her tearful face, when through the gathering gloom of twilight, she discerned her lover approaching. He had been sometime seeking her through the sheltered walks of the garden, and expecting to find her alone; but when he saw her father beside her, and perceived by their attitude and their emotion, that he had disturbed a scene of no common interest, he would have retired had not Major Courtland perceiving his design, caught his hand, exclaiming,

"Grahame, you must not fly me! I know all your hopes, and I wish to cancel the remembrance of my past injustice, by enabling you to realize them."

"I can remember nothing of Major Courtland," returned Grahame, "but the kindness and the friendship which have conferred on me so many obligations, and yielded me so many hours of unalloyed enjoyment."

"And I too," returned the Major, "can remember with gratitude the manly generosity which has pardoned my caprice, indulged my paternal anxiety, and respected the national attachments, which a less temperate and candid mind would have stigmatized as party prejudice. Colonel Grahame, you have won from me, in defiance of selfish feeling, the involuntary homage of my esteem and admiration; and I would bind you to me by a tie which death only can disunite."

"You know, then, of my presumption," said Grahame, in a tone of transport; "and you do not forbid me to indulge the hopes which your lovely daughter has inspired?"

"Cherish them, Grahame," returned the Major; and drawing the trembling Catherine gently forward, he added, "And receive from a father's hand this pledge of his affection and esteem. I give you, what is of far more value to me than the treasures of the East: cherish her with tenderness, and may her love shed over your life the brightness which it has cast upon mine, and dispel the gathering clouds which in life's brief journey so often darken our horizon. And may God who is over all, protect and bless you both!"

He placed his daughter's hand in that of her lover, and hastily retired, to quell in secret the tumult of his feelings and recover the composure which had been so much disturbed. The more he thought of the consent which he had yielded, the more perfect was his satisfaction. Happy in the prospect of Catherine's happiness, and no longer vexed by suspicion and uncertainty, his health returned, and the cheerfulness of his spirits gave evidence, that all within was peaceful and serene.



Colonel Grahame received the hand of Catherine on the same evening when Amelia gave hers to Captain Talbot. But the Colonel's situation forbade his looking forward with certainty to the pleasures of domestic life; and as the season for active service was approaching, and he knew not what might be his destiny, or what sufferings he might be called to endure, he left his bride in the quiet asylum of her father's house, till the return of peace should permit him to enjoy a home made happy by her presence.

Captain Talbot, who was exchanged shortly after his marriage, took Amelia with him to Philadelphia; and during a year she continued, with the ladies of other officers, to follow the motions of the army; when in consequence of a severe wound, which unfitted him for active service, her husband was permitted to return to England, whither she gladly accompanied him.

Captain O'Carroll with his Marion and Minoya, sailed for Europe, about three weeks after the marriage of their friends; where they arrived in safety, and continued for many years to enjoy a life of uninterrupted prosperity and happiness.

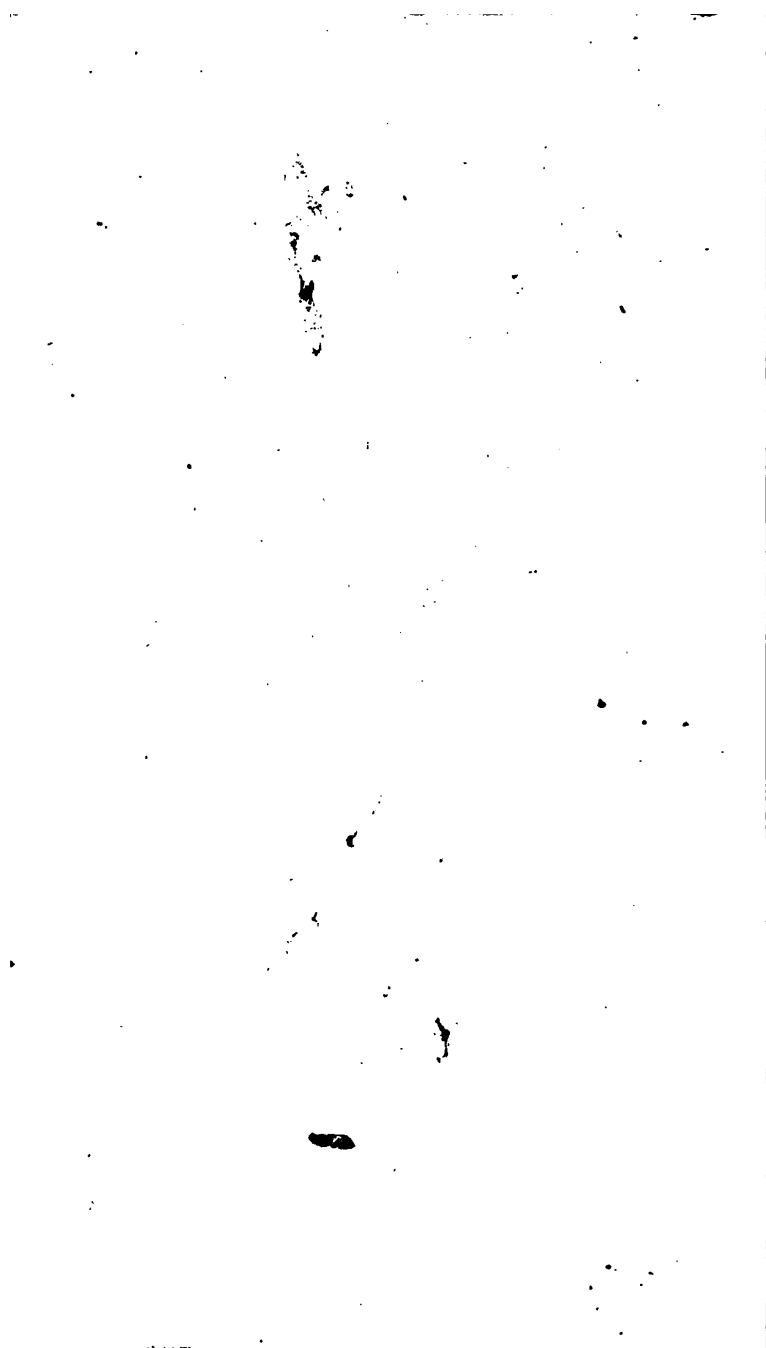
After four years of successful warfare which terminated in the establishment of those rights and privileges, for which the Americans had so valiantly contended, Colonel Grahame was permitted to enjoy that domestic felicity, which he had so long anticipated as the reward of toil, and danger, and suffering; which, in the society of his lovely wife, he found equal to his fondest expectations. His family was honorable, his fortune competent; and in a beautiful part of his native state, he spent the remainder of his days.

The faithful Ohmeina continued attached to his household; and till the last moment of a long and happy life, he evinced the same rectitude of principle and conduct, and the same devotion to his master, of which we have given so many instances in the progress of our history.

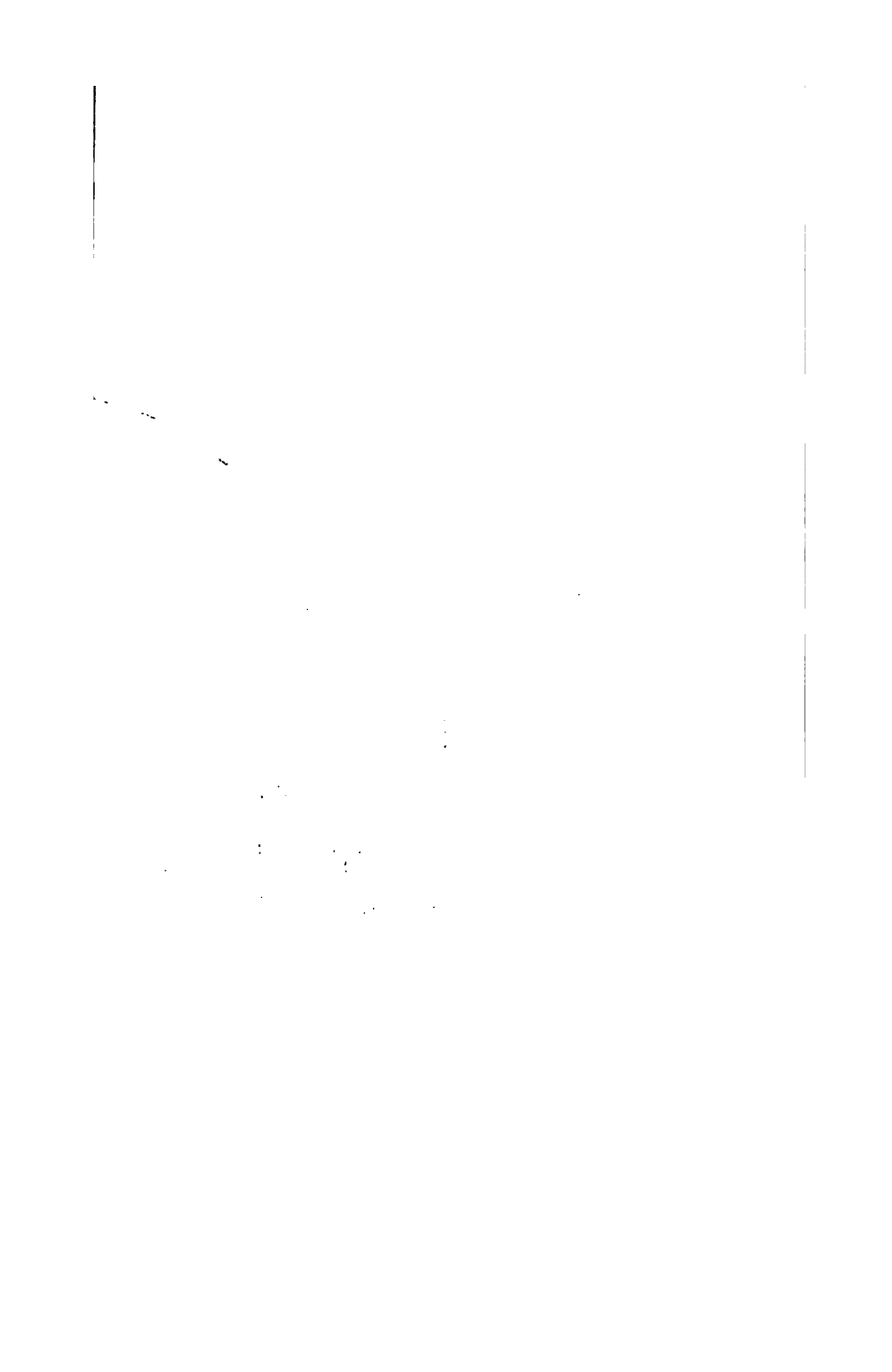
Major Courtland after a visit to England, whither he was accompanied by Colonel and Mrs. Grahame, dis-

posed of his Pennsylvanian estate, and went to live with his beloved Catherine and her husband, who, he often said, was as dear to him as if he had been his own son. Soothed by their affection, and by the view of happiness which he had been the means of promoting, the evening of life glided serenely and peacefully away. He became an American in heart ; and when garrulous old age arrived, he loved to gather his blooming grandchildren around his knees, and tell them of Saratoga, and the capture of the gallant British, by the brave and fearless Americans.

THE END.







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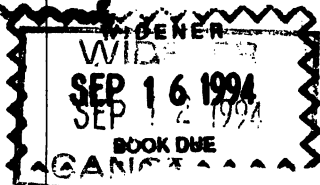
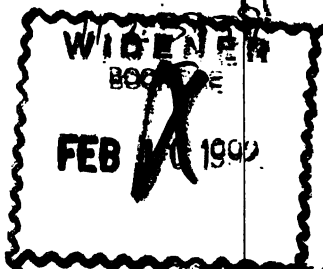
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